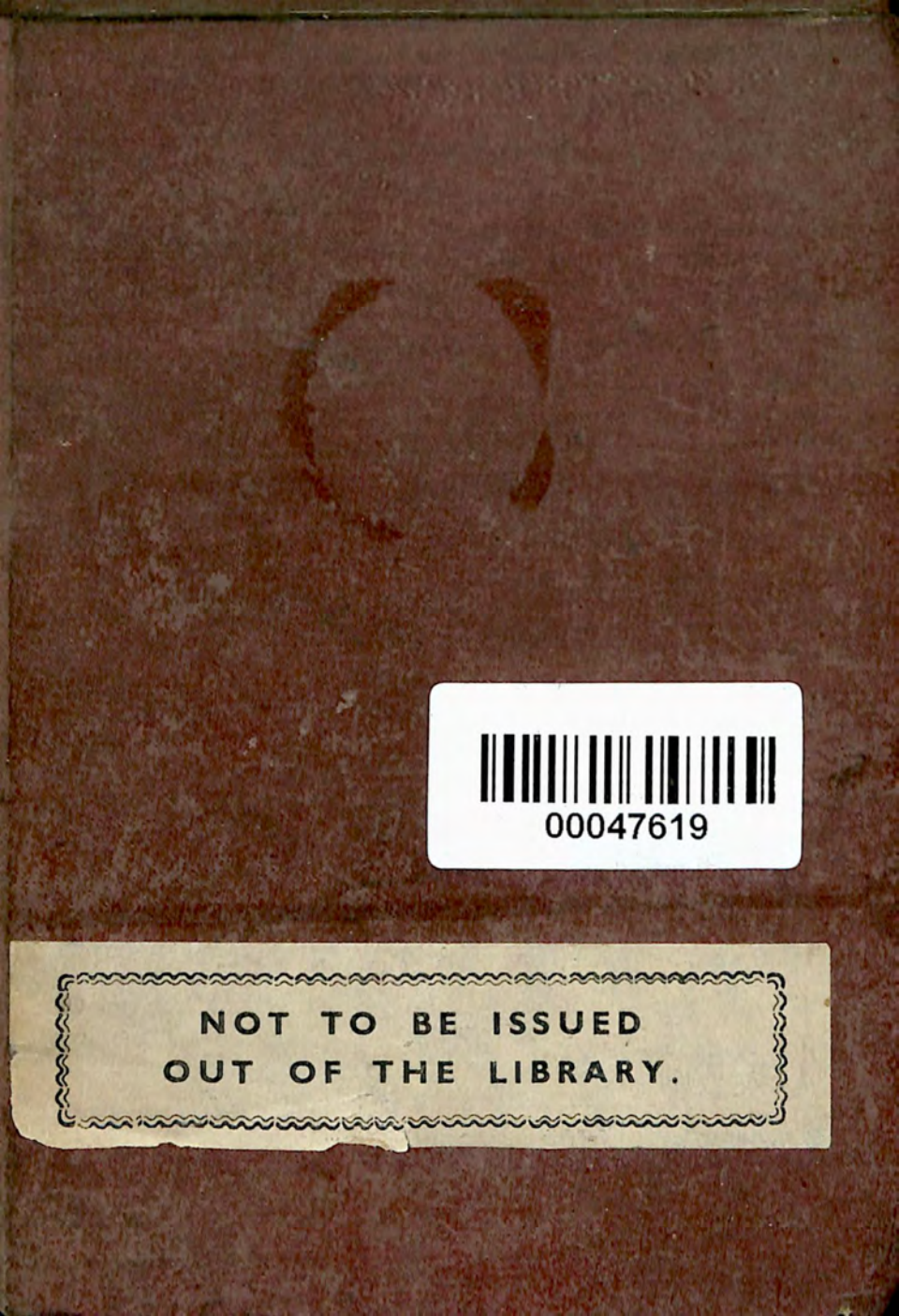

00047619

NOT TO BE ISSUED
OUT OF THE LIBRARY.

BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 March, 2016

ESSAYS AND REMAINS

OF THE REV.

ROBERT ALFRED VAUGHAN.

17613

EDITED, WITH A MEMOIR,

BY THE REV.

ROBERT VAUGHAN, D.D.

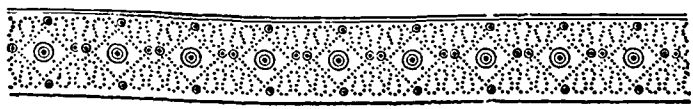
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
JOHN W. PARKER AND SON, WEST STRAND.
1858.

LONDON:
SAVILL AND EDWARDS, PRINTERS, CHANDOS STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.





00K-1-6

CONTENTS OF VOLUME II.

ESSAYS.

	PAGE
HYPATIA; OR, NEW FOES WITH AN OLD FACE	1
LIFE OF SYDNEY SMITH	61
THE CHRIST OF HISTORY	99
LEWES'S LIFE AND WORKS OF GOETHE	114
THE GERMAN COURTS	164
FRENCH ROMANCES OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY	210

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, FRAGMENTS OF CRITICISM, AND POETRY.

SECTION I.

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS:—

THE DREAM OF PHILO	245
ADDRESS TO DIVINITY STUDENTS ON LEAVING COLLEGE	254
ART AND HISTORY	272
THE LEGEND OF THE SANGREAL	285
THE STORY OF NICHOLAS FLAMEL, THE ALCHEMIST	292
INDIA IN 1857: HISTORICAL PARALLELS	306

Section II.

Fragments of Criticism:— PAGE

THACKERAY'S ESMOND 311

BAUMGARTEN'S ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, ETC. GERMAN THEOLOGY 320

ON BALDER 326

MATTHEW ARNOLD'S POEMS 332

AURORA LEIGH 333

CRAIGCROOK CASTLE 338

YOUNG'S PRE-RAFFAELITISM 342

RUSKIN'S NOTES ON THE TURNER GALLERY 346

MAURICE'S MEDIÆVAL PHILOSOPHY 348

MACDONALD'S POEMS 353

SMITH'S CITY POEMS 356

Section III.

THOUGHTS ON RELIGION 358

Section IV.

Poetry:—

ANTONY: A MASQUE 383

THE DISENCHANTMENT 393

THE PILGRIM IN THE TEMPLE 410

LINES FROM FLORENCE 412

HYPATIA; OR, NEW FOES WITH AN OLD FACE.*

SIR THOMAS BROWNE compares heresies to the river Arethusa, which loses its current, and passes underground in one place, to reappear in another. He talks, in his quaint fashion, of a certain metempsychosis of ideas, according to which the soul of one man appears to pass into another, and opinions find, after sundry revolutions, 'men and minds like those that first begat them.' No philosopher has yet arisen fully to follow out the hint of that fanciful old physician to whose egoistic yet genial soliloquizing we still hearken in the pages of the *Religio Medici*. A cynic might, perhaps, regard Adelung's *History of Human Folly* as already occupying nearly all the ground embraced by such a study. Has not Shakspeare said—

> 'One touch of nature makes the whole world kin,
> That all with one consent praise new-born gauds,
> Though they be framed and fashioned of things past?'

True,—as Shakspeare always is—yet what a fascinating theme does the very rebuke disclose. Such an inquiry into the processes by which antiquity has been thus attired in the show of novelty,—into the history of that mysterious interpenetration of old and new,—into the laws, if laws there be, according to which dead thoughts are periodically raised to life, and the past is summoned to play its part under the freshly-painted mask of the present,—might well task the

* *Hypatia; or, New Foes with an Old Face.* By CHARLES KINGSLEY, jun. 2 vols. John W. Parker and Son.

largest powers, would be replete with interest and instruction. It is interesting, in the fairy-land of fiction, to watch the transit of the classic into the romantic fable,—to see Jason and Medea reappear as venturous knight and sage princess,—to find the Fates transformed into duennas keeping watch over Proserpine, and to recognise Cerberus in that 'hideous giant horrible and high,' who guards the melancholy castle of King Pluto. It is yet more so, in the higher provinces of thought, to trace the transmigration of error or of truth into forms familiar to a later age, and to observe the resumption, as in a new element, of conflicts apparently decided long since. What tradition long reported concerning that terrible engagement between the utmost strength of the Roman and the Hun, philosophy exhibits as true respecting the more subtile struggles of human opinion. It was said that, on the night after the battle,—above the vast plains of Châlons, stretching with their heaps of dead miles away into the darkness on either hand—the ghosts of the slain warriors arose, and, marshalled in the upper air, renewed, with unearthly arms and hate, the strife which death had interrupted. Thus has the antagonism of rival modes of thought perpetuated its contest, while the early champions or propounders of either principle are sleeping the sleep of death below. '*Non enim hominum interitu sententiæ quoque occidunt.*'

A comparative survey of the modifications of opinion such as we propose, would furnish many a valuable lesson. It would illustrate, in its course, that substantial identity of human nature which makes one kindred of all times and countries. It would point out those common wants and common hopes which, under every superficial difference, are the foundations of man's nature, somewhat as science finds the inorganic crust of the earth unaltered by varieties of clime, and trap and basalt, porphyry and granite, everywhere the same, whether crested by the branching palm, or mantled shaggily by stunted firs. It would separate between the original and the stolen property of modern speculation, and bring about such a general gaol-delivery of plagiarisms as might well remind us of those grotesque

mediæval pictures of the last judgment, in which the fishes appear bearing in their mouths the heads, arms, and legs of the drowned men they have devoured. It would show how often the prophetic words of the confessors and the martyrs of reform in religion or in science—which seemed to be shed like an untimely product on the earth—to be scattered by winds, and trodden into mire by the hoof of beasts, have been in reality conserved, and made to utter their voice in another form to another generation, even as the withered leaves in the fabled island of the Hebrides were said to be changed into singing-birds as soon as they had fallen to the ground. Such an inquiry would occupy a space in the kingdom of mind as comprehensive as that of physical geography in the kingdom of nature. It would be the metaphysical 'Cosmos' of the mysterious microcosm —man. As the botanist can trace the course of certain races of the human family by the presence of particular plants, which are only found where they have trodden, so would our investigator pursue the history of a certain order of mind by those modifications of mental product, and those practical and moral fruits, which uniformly spring up in its train. As the zoologist has always derived, from the examination of monstrous and aberrant forms, material to extend his knowledge of the regularly-developed organism, so the misshapen creations of mental extravagance or disease would throw light for the philosopher on the sources of man's danger, on the true power and province of man's mind. As the votary of science learns to distinguish between the physiological and the morphological import of the organs of a plant, when he finds the same vital function which belongs to the leaf in one species, carried on by the stem in another,—so would it be with our inquirer, if possessed of a sagacity equal to his undertaking. He would find the intellectual life of successive periods fostered, now by one class of men, and now by another,—that no order or institution can be declared the necessary organ by which society shall breathe or feed,—and that he must often look for the vitality of an age, not in the professed centre of its culture, but in some portion of its growth which, to a superficial

eye, would appear only an unsightly excrescence, or an unimportant appendage. He would learn, too, to anticipate, from the revival of old errors, the revival of old reactions appropriately modified, and would contemplate with wonder that beneficent provision by which the most baneful opinions appear, almost invariably, accompanied by their antidotes—the excess of the evil provoking a healthful antagonism, so that the poison and the medicine grow side by side, as the healing trumpet-tree is said always to raise its purple blossoms in the neighbourhood of the deadly manchineel.

From the somewhat enigmatical title of Mr. Kingsley's tale, we had looked for a contribution, which we felt sure would be of value, in the direction now indicated. It appeared to be his purpose to indicate the substantial identity of the past and the present strife waged between that wisdom of this world accounted foolishness by God, and that preaching of the cross so often accounted foolishness by man. The past conflict he has depicted fully, and with admirable skill. But its parallel with the present antagonism of similar parties is but generally hinted at in a summary remark or two on his last page.

This reticence may have proceeded from æsthetic or from prudential considerations. Cyril of Alexandria, with his bitter worldly heart and oily sanctimonious phrase, with his capacity for business and for hatred alike enormous, is a shadow among shadows. But the Bishop of Exeter, into whose body the soul of Cyril has unquestionably transmigrated, is a living reality in lawn. It might not be pleasant to approach too nearly that ecclesiastical mud volcano, which, always growling and simmering, may explode in an instant with such terrific force its bespattering baptism of abuse. Again, Mr. Newman, like Porphyry, aspires to be a religious man without being a Christian, and in behalf of an ambitious and unintelligible religious sentiment, assails the Old Testament and misconceives the New. Like Iamblichus, too, many of our sceptical spiritualists are credulous votaries of the theurgic pretensions of our time. They find the gospels incredible, but they have surrendered to

the Poughkeepsie Seer. Their reason rises in disdain against the claims of an apostle, but falls prostrate before an American rapping. Their faith resembles that of Dr. Johnson, who refused to credit the report of the earthquake at Lisbon, but could believe in the Cock-lane ghost. These spiritual manifestations of our own day are the counterpart of those pretended marvels which deluded the Alexandrian adepts who were too wise to receive the faith of the Nazarene. If Mr. Kingsley had pursued his parallel, therefore, he would have had work enough upon his hands. The two foes he had so faithfully portrayed would have united against him. The bigots would have assailed him on the one side, and the infidels on the other. In the hands of adversaries so embittered, his reputation could scarcely have escaped the fate of his heroine Hypatia.

But no one acquainted with the spirit of Mr. Kingsley's writings will readily believe that he has in any undue measure the fear of man before his eyes. He is more likely to have paused where he has done, from deference to what he deemed the dictate of taste, than from any cautious heed to the presentiments of timidity. He considers, probably, the history he has revived as a parable, which, like all parables good for anything, carries its main lesson on the surface. He would urge, with some truth, in his justification, that the moral of a story should be suggested rather than obtruded, —that a romance is not the place for a homily,—that the painter is only indirectly the preacher,—that those who have ears to hear will hear with advantage, and those who have not will never be prosed into wisdom. Still we think that some farther application of the results brought out by this study of the past should have been attempted. A concluding chapter, embracing some such thoughtful and suggestive summary, and indicating the real analogies and distinctions between the old conflict and the new, would greatly have enhanced the value of the book.

In point of style, Mr. Kingsley differs widely from Mr. Maurice and Mr. Trench, with whom, in matters of opinion, he appears to

possess much in common. Mr. Maurice is easy and natural; his flowing language carries the reader with him right pleasantly, and there is a pellucid simplicity about the sentences severally which is not a little charming. But the effect of the whole is marred by a want of definiteness. Much is suggested, little is established. An ingenious succession of side-lights are thrown upon the subject, but in some way they perplex each other. We miss that vigorous and telling summary of results, without which we may be dazzled or amused, but are left uninstructed after all as to the contemplated conclusion of the whole.

Mr. Trench, again, is less defective in this respect, though accustomed sometimes to invest his theme with an unnecessary abstraction, and apt to handle it in a large aerial manner, imposing enough, but unsatisfactory to such as desire to see eloquent philosophical generalizations always well supported by the evidence and detail of facts. The style of Mr. Trench, where his subject allows him full scope, is stately, rich, and full—a kind of ecclesiastical antique,—now breathing out some pensive imagination—

> 'To the Dorian mood
> Of flutes, and soft recorder,'—

and now again rising into grandeur, coloured by the many-slanting hues of his cathedral window—Fancy. It is characterized more by beauty than by power, yet it possesses so much of the former as never to be wholly destitute of the latter. Its appeal is that of taste and learning to a circle comparatively limited.

Mr. Kingsley, on the other hand, addresses a larger auditory in another tone. His vehement and daring nature has marked out a course for itself. He is thought to have been even too oblivious, at times, of the smooth-shaven proprieties—of the starched and white-neckclothed nicety of ecclesiastical conventionalism. In fact, he would seem, at one time, to have taken the Carlyle fever, and to have had it very badly indeed. But the sickness did not with him, as with poor Sterling, develope into a life-long disorder. Mr. Kingsley got over

his Carlyle period as other strong minds have survived their Werter and Byron periods—their era of affectation and sentimentality—that time of life wherein, as of old,—

> 'Young gentlemen would be as sad as night,
> Only for wantonness.'—

So Mr. Kingsley recovered, and now exhibits a mental constitution whose vitals the disease has left untouched. In all he has written, the freshness and vigour of an independent and powerful mind are apparent. Even where we think him wrong, we cannot but respect his motive, and honour his conscientiousness and courage. The excellences of his style are his own, its faults those of the school in which he appears first to have studied. There is observable in many parts of his writings a strain and violence hardly compatible with the highest order of power—a certain self-conscious and spasmodic effort which cannot dare to be calm and natural, which fears repose as though it were dulness and death inevitable. He loves abrupt transitions, dashes, intervening chains of dots, and has used, but too freely, stage property of this sort, for the purpose of effect. But his sins in this respect are venial, compared with those of Mr. Carlyle. Already he is outgrowing such faults; and *Hypatia*, while thoroughly characteristic of the author of *Yeast* and *Alton Locke*, manifests a patient, thoughtful comprehensiveness, to which neither of those very clever books can lay claim. The vices to which, under such influence, Mr. Kingsley was most exposed—those of exaggeration and one-sidedness, he appears now to have almost completely escaped. It may not be flattering to Mr. Carlyle, but we believe it to be true, that by far the larger proportion of the best minds, whose early youth his writings have powerfully influenced, will look back on the period of such subjection as the most miserably morbid season of their life. On awaking from such delirium to the sane and healthful realities of manful toil, they will discover the hollowness of that sneering, scowling, wailing, declamatory, egotistical, and bombastic misanthropy, which, in the

eye of their unripe judgment, wore the air of a philosophy so profound.

It is but justice to Mr. Kingsley to bear in mind what, so circumstanced, he refrains from doing, as well as what he does. He does not imagine that, to speak to the universal heart, he has only to 'thou' the reader, to apostrophize him as 'brother,' or loudly to cry, 'O man!' He does not believe that a short-winded Emersonian sentence is great of necessity with oracular majesty. He does not regard it as indicative of vast superiority, to call his fellow-labourers in the historic field, or his fellow-men, anywhere, dry-as-dusts, pudding-heads, imbeciles, choughs, beetles, apes, and ostriches. He does not reckon a certain vituperative volubility among the supernatural privileges of the inspired priesthood of letters. He does not believe that either originality or depth can be secured by the virtue inherent in capital letters. He does not serve up pages liberally besprinkled with Silences, Eternities, and Abysses, as a condiment attractive to the jaded appetite, which loathes everything natural. He does not fill with the commonest verity some monstrous and unwieldy sentence, till it seems a discovery of appalling import, while the whole may be compared to a giant in a midsummer pageant, 'marching,' as saith an old writer, 'as though it were alive, and armed at all points, but within stuffed full of browne paper and tow, which the shrewd boyes, under peeping, do guilefully discover, and turne to a greate derision.'

The strength so conspicuous in Mr. Kingsley's writings is power of that kind which results from the consecration of great gifts to a great purpose. His convictions are strong, his aim is worthy. He is not one of the many clever men of our time whose acuteness and whose talents are rendered almost futile by a lack of earnest conviction. Now Mr. Kingsley does believe strongly; as Austin Caxton would say—he never forgets 'the saffron-bag.' What he believes he must speak, and what he says he must make men hear. He is not to be precluded by his profession from the use of any legitimate means which shall secure attention to his message. If men will not

hear his truth in essays, sermons, and big books, they shall receive it in the drama, the tale, and the historical romance. In addition to this intensity and concentrativeness, this faculty of gathering up in a present purpose all the energy he possesses, Mr. Kingsley is endowed, in no small measure, with that gift of language which communicates to other minds the creations and the feelings that people his own. There are only certain words which will do this. The faculty which detects and rightly places them makes a man a painter with the pen. Such terms and epithets are the *vincula* between the unseen world of an author's mind and the actual world constituted by his public. They are the magic-formulæ, the runes and spell-words by which marvels are wrought in the poet's 'heaven of invention.' In his slightest touches Mr. Kingsley displays the artist. He discerns at a glance those features of an object which must be brought out to realize the whole to the eye.

This power of selection as to what shall be described, and this choice of what is perhaps the one only epithet in the language which could vividly and accurately indicate it, is the secret of that life and force which distinguish his delineations. Thus there is so much chilly verisimilitude about his description of the hunting-field on a foggy morning, with which *Yeast* opens, as to make a susceptible reader quite damp and uncomfortable. It is like Constable's picture of rain, which made Fuseli open his umbrella. In like manner, to read of those Goths in sunny, dusty, broiling Alexandria, singing of northern snows, is verily like the refreshment of an ice in the dog-days. And so throughout, those who will give themselves up fairly to the enjoyment of Mr. Kingsley's pages may be carried within an hour to the remotest extremes of climate, physical or moral; they may travel from Hyperborean frosts to burning Abyssinia—from the mental territory of the ice-bound sceptic to the dangerous heats of brain-sick fanaticism.

But, apart from this descriptive faculty, there is another attribute to which Mr. Kingsley owes no small proportion of his deserved success: this quality is sympathy. Without this insight of the

heart an acute and comprehensive mind may accomplish not a little as a philosopher, but, as an artist, must be powerless. It is much to be able to entertain two ideas at the same time—at least, such capacity would seem to be more rare among us than could be wished, judging from the desperate haste with which we see men daily rushing from extreme to extreme, and stultifying themselves by arguing from abuse against use. But higher yet is his endowment who possesses a heart in some measure open to all mankind—who can enter into the hopes and fears, the sorrows and the temptation of minds the most opposite. We admire the calmness which can so deliberately estimate the strength and the weakness of either side in the battle between truth and error. We pay our tribute of praise to the graphic skill which realizes, with equal truth, the religious stillness of the desert, and the tumultuous horror of the amphitheatre—which exhibits, with such ease and clearness, almost as it were in passing, that strange compound, yclept Alexandrian philosophy, and can compress into a sentence the system of Lucretius, till we seem to see the forlorn world as he saw it—an aimless and everlasting gravitation of innumerable atoms. But most of all do we love that true-hearted kindliness, the tenderness of the strong, which gently and reverently lifts the veil from the dark and mournful sanctuary of hearts that have found no God—that tremble bewildered between their devotion and their doubt—that seek, but seek amiss, or that are seen in one place denying the use of search, and, in another, discovering a deity only to be crushed with terror. It is from the heart alone that any writer could have limned those changing features of the soul that we behold working, now in aspiration, and now in despair, in the history of Hypatia, of Aben Ezra, and Pelagia. The same sympathizing spirit can detect traits of nature not wholly alien yet from the fellow-feeling of fellow-sinners, in Cyril, in Eudæmon, in Miriam,—in the scheming prelate, in the frivolous and selfish sciolist, in the fierce and abandoned procuress. Even in the case of Peter the Reader, cowardly, mean, and bloodthirsty as the man is, a retrospective word or two shows

us that he too had his affections once, was not thus evil always, and had been open to the touch of pity. Thus the geologist may point to the watermarks on the fragment of hardened rock, revealing a primæval history, and recalling the time when it was a bright and yielding sand, traversed by the silver ripples of some pool or frith, that shone and murmured amid the solitudes of the unpeopled world.

Hypatia exhibits, as a work of art, a manifest advance on the former productions of Mr. Kingsley. The same power in the delineation of character, the same passion and pathos, intermingled now with humour and now with sarcasm, which characterized his earlier writings, are equally manifest in the present story, with a result more satisfactory, a truer unity of design, more judgment, and apparently more careful thought in the management of incident and dialogue. As a whole, the work is more successful in a province confessedly more difficult.

Mr. Kingsley never gives such scope to his indignation as when speaking of that worst thing—the corruption of the best. His severest lash is reserved for the smiling malignity and the sleek villanies of Pharisees and zealots. He is at home in detecting and holding up to abhorrence the secret Atheism that lurks in the heart of all intolerance, the iniquity of that unbelief which sins in the name of holiness and attempts the work of God with the tools of the devil. He is the sworn enemy of all those pretences under which men would part off the religious from the civil world, and override the sanctions of morality for the promotion of an ecclesiastical interest. But, unlike many loud-voiced denouncers of 'windbags,' 'red-tape-isms,' and 'shams,' he tells us what he loves, quite as plainly as what he hates, what he believes as clearly as what he disbelieves. He does not with incessant bark assail every effort philanthropy actually makes, and after snapping at the legs of every messenger of mercy, withdraw into his tub—the cynic prophet of negation. He has something positive to announce and to commend. He does not see in the mass of mankind a flat and dreary

deluge of common-place—an aggregate of transitory waves lifted up into a momentary being, raised for a transitory glance at sun and moon, and then subsiding into unfathomable night. He believes in a gospel which the poor hear gladly. Through all the gathered clouds of error, amidst the countless misbegotten phantoms of darkness that blot her glory, he beholds in history the Church of Christ —the Jerusalem which is from above, and is happy in the sight of the gleaming gold and sapphire, darting ever and anon a ray through the vapours from the mouth of the pit. While bringing out in unsparing relief the ill-omened features of that corruption which, in the fifth century, had already maimed and defiled the church, he does not fail to indicate aright the secret of her real power. One great lesson is plainly taught by his book. Christianity—in spite of its doctrinal disputes, so subtile and so envenomed, on questions utterly insoluble,—in spite of those wrangling, persecuting factions, whose inveterate hatred embroiled East and West, Roman and Barbarian, Greek and Goth, throughout the length and breadth of the tottering empire,—in spite of the trumpery of miracle-mongering, ecstasies, and exorcisms,—of the fanaticism and the stupor, the fury and the filth, of oriental monasticism—Christianity had, in his view, nevertheless, an answer for the deepest cravings of man's heart, which philosophic culture could not in its dreams surmise, and was busy with a benevolence, and glorious with a self-devotion, that attested daily a celestial origin—a divine commission.

Hypatia is no one-sided apology for Christianity; it is a faithful representation of the thinkings and doings of men called Christians at Alexandria, in their conflict with the vanishing theories and the too substantial evils of the dying giant heathendom. The intellectual opposition they encountered was comparatively feeble—the moral, gigantic. Pagan philosophy had made, now and then, an effort to stay, with the arms of rhetoric and dialectics, the vices of the time. But the weapons belonged to one element, and the adversaries aimed at to another. The immorality which peopled the

atmosphere of old Hellas mocked the efforts of the sages, and seemed to say from the high place of the powers of the air—

> 'The elements
> Of whom your swords are tempered, may as well
> Wound the loud winds, or with bemock'd at stabs
> Kill the still-closing waters, as diminish
> One dowle that's in my plume.'

Then came Christianity,—winning her first purifying successes in a world noisome with the accumulated and legitimized impurity of many ages,—appealing to the heart, to sanctions, to motives, to hopes, drawn from the highest, and tending thither. But the struggle soiled ere long her garments—the spirit of the world she had overcome entered into her, and the arts of the conquered became the lesson of the conqueror.

Accordingly we find the Alexandrian church, in the fifth century, already accomplished in the questionable practices of that secularity she professed to sway and aspired to reform. The sectarianism, the ignorance, the pride, the clerical place-hunting, the bigotry, the sanctimonious pretence of fashion or of coarseness, the unholy passions baptized by Christian names,—all, in short, that which makes up in our own day the common stock objection of the irreligious to Christianity, was as odiously apparent then as now. Not small will be the service of Mr. Kingsley's story if it awakens in some wavering minds the inquiry—'Has not Christianity now believers like Augustine, Majoricus, and Victoria, as well as its Cyrils and its Peters; and its message to the weary sceptical Raphaels of the nineteenth century even as to him of the fifth?'

The opening chapter of the tale introduces us to the dwelling-place of a colony of monks among the ancient ruins and the burning sand-hills near the banks of the Nile, about three hundred miles above Alexandria. A young monk, named Philammon, seized with the desire of viewing for himself the great world without, obtains from his anxious superiors permission to depart, and on a summer's night glides down the river in his little skiff towards the famous

metropolis. Once arrived there, each day amazes with a new wonder the innocence of the youthful anchorite. He views with admiration the state, the discipline, the numbers, of the Christian world at Alexandria. With all the zeal of novelty, he gives himself to his share in the benevolent labours of his monastic brethren. But he learns, to his astonishment, that Christianity is not the only power at work. The state is not Christian, though at Constantinople the emperor professes the Christian faith. Strange speculations, lofty and fascinating, maintain their place, denounced as hellish by his brother monks, but having, in the very mystery and prohibition, a potent charm for a mind longing after knowledge, and strong in an untried faith. Hypatia, a woman, young, beautiful, and wise, fills her lecture-hall day after day with the fashion, the talent, and the wealth of the city, as she expounds this lofty and time-honoured philosophy. He thirsts for the opportunity of some great achievement: might not he, Philammon, hear and judge, rise up and refute, and bring the wanderer home into the fold of Christ? The attempt is made. Philammon is treated by Hypatia with forbearance, by the coarse jealousy of his brethren he is heaped with wrong and insult. He takes refuge, from a church so much worse than he had thought it, with a philosophy so much better, and becomes the pupil of Hypatia. But, in the sequel, he discovers that what is refined in heathendom, cannot be practically separated from what is brutal and licentious,—that philosophy, even in the person of its best and holiest representative, is powerless to purify and slow to pity, and the prodigal returns repentant to his forsaken home.

Such is the mere threadwork of a story, in the course of which the author contrives to bring his readers in contact with most of the motley phases of life that made up the sum of Alexandrian existence, and to afford them the advantage Philammon enjoyed, of hearing for themselves both sides. The advancing action presents to view Orestes, the prefect—an indolent debauchee, a fair type of many a provincial ruler in those days of feebleness and

expediency; Hypatia, the priestess of philosophy, mourning over the extinct 'Promethean heat,' for ever departed from the shrines at which she worships; the giant Goths, stalking terribly among the donkey-riding Alexandrians, drinking, lounging, singing of Asgard and the northern heroes, and ready to sell their doughty sword-strokes to any cause not compromising their rude ideas of honour—finely contrasting, in their savage dignity, with the mass of that pauper populace, so cowardly and cunning, and, at times, so turbulent and fierce, hungering after shows and largesses, after bread without work, and blood without danger; the monks, swarming everywhere, blindly rancorous, and blindly beneficent, disciplined like an army by the stern and methodical Cyril, every now and then raising a riot, hunting down a heretic, and persecuting the Jews, yet constantly employed in nursing the sick, succouring the distressed, and toiling in benign attendance on those social maladies which imperial misgovernment produced, perpetuated, and left the church to cure as best she might.

The following picture of sunrise, in the desert region of Scetis, is a fair specimen of Mr. Kingsley's descriptive powers:—

'As he spoke, a long arrow of level light flashed down the gorge from crag to crag, awakening every crack and slab to vividness and life. The great crimson sun rose swiftly through the dim night mist of the desert; and as he poured his glory down the glen, the haze rose in threads and plumes, and vanished, leaving the stream to sparkle round the rocks, like the living twinkling eye of the whole scene. Swallows flashed by hundreds out of the cliffs, and began their air-dance for the day; the jerboa hopped stealthily homeward on his stilts, from his stolen meal in the monastery garden; the brown sand-lizards, underneath the stones, opened one eyelid each, and having satisfied themselves that it was day, dragged their bloated bodies and whip-like tails out into the most burning patch of gravel which they could find, and nestling together, as a further protection against cold, fell fast asleep again; the buzzard, who considered himself lord of the valley, awoke, with a long querulous

bark, and rising aloft in two or three vast rings, to stretch himself after his night's sleep, hung motionless, watching every lark which chirruped on the cliffs; while from the far-off Nile below, the awakening croak of pelicans, the clang of geese, the whistle of the godwit and curlew, came ringing up the windings of the glen; and, last of all, the voices of the monks arose, chanting a morning hymn to some wild Eastern air; and a new day had begun in Scetis, like those which went before, and those which were to follow after, week after week, year after year, of toil and prayer, as quiet as its sleep.'—p. 232, vol. i.

This compressed and rapid sketch of the squire-bishop Synesius is very life-like:—

''What, is the worthy old man as lively as ever?'

''Lively? He nearly drove me into a nervous fever in three days. Up at four in the morning, always in the most disgustingly good health and spirits, farming, coursing, shooting, riding over hedge and ditch after rascally black robbers; preaching, intriguing, borrowing money; baptizing and excommunicating; bullying that bully Andronicus; comforting old women, and giving pretty girls dowries; scribbling one half hour on philosophy, and the next on farriery; sitting up all night writing hymns and drinking strong liquors; off again on horseback at four the next morning; and talking by the hour all the while about philosophic abstraction from the mundane tempest. Heaven defend me from all two-legged whirlwinds!''—p. 37, vol. i.

Synesius is a specimen of a remarkable class of men not unfrequently met with during the transition period of the fifth century. The opinions he represents are familiar in their outlines to every student of the times, but it is peculiarly gratifying to have presented to us so fresh and graphic a portraiture of the daily habits and mode of life of one of the most interesting individuals of the species. Synesius is a kind of Christian Orpheus—a writer of mystical hymns that read like a rhapsodical strain from Apuleius intermingled with echoes from the psalter. He accepts a Christian

episcopate, but he cannot repudiate the lessons of Pappus and of Hieron. The doctrine of the resurrection, in its literal acceptation, is too carnal for his ethereal Platonism. He cannot surrender the pre-existence of the soul, or admit the destruction of the world. He holds fast the dogma of emanation, invokes the Father as Plato's primordial Unity, and the Son as the Platonic Demiurge. He aspires to heaven as the region of the ideal—the native realm of Intelligible Archetypes. He must be allowed to philosophize at home, while he announces the popular religion out of doors. The inconsistency he reconciles to his conscience by reflecting that the eye of the vulgar is weakly,—that too much light might produce the effect of falsehood,—that an element of fable is indispensable in the instruction of the multitude. The old aristocratic intellectualism of the heathen world reigns in him to the last; but a kind heart often gets the better of philosophic pride, and he has much more of the Christian in him than the name.

Such was the position of the historical Synesius in the controversy between philosophy and faith, and the Synesius of Mr. Kingsley's fiction is a truthful and vigorous conception of the character as exhibited in those remains which time has preserved to us.

Men like Synesius united in their own persons the civilization of the old world and the new. They exemplify the combination of that civil life of the empire which was so decrepit, and that ecclesiastical life which was so vigorous. Throughout the west the emperors encouraged schools and libraries, with their several complements of learned men, in every considerable town. Imperial patronage provided amply for the ancient culture, and professors of rhetoric and grammar, of philosophy and law, stood ready in great numbers to meet the intellectual wants of the time. But these institutions, endowed and privileged as they were, could scarcely be said to live. A Christian youth was rarely seen in their lecture-rooms. The pagan teachers spent their days in trying to make knowledge easy to a handful of listless pupils from the families of the provincial aristocracy. The monasteries were

destined ere long to supersede such instructors, and the class they instructed was speedily to disappear. While such institutions vegetated thus pitiably, Jerome and Augustine influenced the Christian world from one extremity of the empire to the other. Had some Christian lady a case of conscience, or some Christian community a question of doctrine to be settled, priests were found who, at a moment's notice, would traverse sea and land, would cross the perilous passes of the Alps, or brave the heats of the Syrian wildernesses, to bring an answer from some saintly authority far away. The readers of idyls, and of eclogues, of epitaphs, epigrams, and panegyrics, were few. A religious treatise, or the life of a saint, circulated everywhere. The trivial and pedantic imitations of the past, produced by pagan writers, touched the present scarcely in a single point. The letters and pamphlets of Christian authors were written for immediate effect, oftentimes with haste and heat, but always with earnestness. They handled, with a power that made itself felt, momentous questions like that of grace and freewill, and discussed themes in which every Christian felt a common interest. The ecclesiastical writers had not yet lost their liberty; the professors of pagan literature had never any liberty to lose. State-patronage involved state-surveillance. Imbecile and servile, without power and without a purpose, without the vitality which fosters genius, or the freedom which gives it play, these last representatives of antique conservatism offered in vain to supply what the world had ceased to demand. Like children, they were occupied in building paper boats, while the sinewy arms of the churchmen were fashioning an ark which should ride the deluge of barbaric invasion. They remind us of a fairy tale concerning an old man who had literally lost his heart. He told his young wife that it was in the coverlet, and she covered that with gay feathers and with flowers to delight his heart. 'Nay,' said he, 'your kindness is vain—it is in the door.' She covered the door in like manner, with no better result. At last he confessed that it was within a bird that lived in a church secured by iron doors, and surrounded by a deep moat. It

was thus that the heart of mankind had withdrawn itself from antiquity—had abandoned the aged body to its natural decay, and taken up its dwelling in the Christian church. In vain did the devotees of the past adorn its institutions with every ingenious fancy a fond regret could devise; the flowers they wove could only make a funeral garland, the heart was fled for ever. Many of these worshippers of by-gone taste and by-gone abstractions were heard to complain that the gospel was not adapted to their wants. To the people, indeed, it might appear as food,—to their æsthetic intellectualism it was but foolishness. There are some among us now who echo this objection. Such men are maimed and sickly specimens of the species. It is not to be wondered at that men who have morbidly developed one half of their nature at the expense of the other, should find insufficient attraction in a religion which addresses the heart equally with the head, and is conspicuous for the absence of that onesidedness which is their especial pride. Such allegations are in no respect more reasonable than the objection urged by the half-drunken Udaller against the two-handled plough proposed by Triptolemus Yellowley. 'Tell me,' said Magnus Troil, 'how it were possible for Neil of Lupness, that lost one arm by his fall from the crag of Nekbrechan, to manage a plough with two handles.'

The best surviving remnants of Roman civilization were the class of educated country gentlemen. They are found in the fifth century throughout the western empire residing on their estates, the petty lords of the neighbourhood, men of large property and cultivated taste. They have fine libraries, houses beautifully furnished, often a private theatre where some rhetorician performs his comedy before the patron, himself a writer of odes and epigrams, and perhaps no indifferent composer of music.* Their time is given to the chase, to elegant banquets, to literary conversaziones. Looking with disdain as philosophers on the degeneracy around them, and with indifference as men of wealth on the ordinary objects of ambition, they take little part in public affairs. Indifferent on religious matters, they make no effort to revive the old faith, or to oppose

the new. Give them their books and their hounds, their generous wines and their little circle of dilettanti, a pleasant friend to rattle the dice with them, or a lively party at tennis, and they are happy. They will chat the morning through under the vines without touching once on a theme of moment to church or state, to gods or men. The news of battle and revolt, of lost provinces and changing empire, they will vote a bore, and forget it presently, as, with a jest or a yawn, they return to a new drama or the last impromptu, to a critical conjecture or a disputed etymology.

Meanwhile the earnest business of life goes on without these trifling egotists, and power is daily passing into other hands. Men find the Christian bishop everything which such luxurious idlers are not. They detest business; he toils in a whirl of it from morning to night. They stand aloof from the people; he lives among them, visits, preaches, catechises, settles disputes, has an ear for every applicant, finds time for every duty. While they are given up to self-enjoyment, he is the admiration of the country round for his austerity and active self-denial. While they are occupied by fits and starts with the curious indolence of a rhetorical philosophy, he is proclaiming a living truth to the multitude. He teaches the wakeful earnest husbandry of life, while they are dreaming it away with questions which, to the working many, are not worth a straw.

It was to be expected that, in process of time, these two characters would frequently unite in the same person. The more thoughtful, active, or benevolent among the members of this imperial squirearchy would discern, ere long, that through the church alone could they take any effective part in the real work of their day. Some embracing more, and others less of the popular Christian doctrine, they entered the episcopal or priestly office, and exercised an influence they could never otherwise have acquired. While thus far identifying themselves with the new order of things, they did not, however, relinquish all their old tastes and pleasures. The man of the world and the man of wit, the devotee of pagan philosophy and

the wooer of the classic muse, were still apparent beneath the robes of the bishop. Such was Synesius in Cyrene, Sidonius Apollinaris in Gaul, and many more.

But leaving these occupants of the frontier line, let us visit the camp of the enemy, and endeavour to realize the character and purpose of the last antagonist arrayed by antiquity against the youthful faith of the Cross.

First of all, as to what Neo-Platonism really was, and then as to the cause of its feebleness and utter failure when tested in conflict, even with the Christianity of the fifth century. Let us hear a part of the lecture Mr. Kingsley puts into the mouth of Hypatia. She has read aloud, from the *Iliad*, the well-known parting of Hector and Andromache, and then gives the following spiritualized exposition of the passage, treating it, in the style of her school, not as a tale of human passion, but as a philosophical allegory. 'Such,' she says, 'is the myth.'

'Do you fancy that in it Homer meant to hand down to the admiration of ages such earthly commonplaces as a mother's brute affection, and the terrors of an infant? Surely the deeper insight of the philosopher may be allowed, without the reproach of fancifulness, to see in it the adumbration of some deeper mystery.

'The elect soul, for instance—is not its name Astyanax, king of the city; by the fact of its ethereal parentage, the leader and lord of all around it, though it knows it not? A child as yet, it lies upon the fragrant bosom of its mother, Nature, the nurse and yet the enemy of man. Andromache, as the poet well names her, because she fights with that being, when grown to man's estate, whom as a child she nourished. Fair is she, yet unwise; pampering us, after the fashion of mothers, with weak indulgences; fearing to send us forth into the great realities of speculation, there to forget her in the pursuit of glory; she would have us while away our prime within the harem, and play for ever round her knees. And has not the elect soul a father, too, whom it knows not? Hector, he who is without—unconfined, unconditioned by Nature, yet its hus-

band?—the all-pervading plastic soul, informing, organizing, whom men call Zeus the lawgiver, Æther the fire, Osiris the lifegiver; whom here the poet has set forth as the defender of the mystic city, the defender of harmony, and order, and beauty, throughout the universe? Apart sits his great father—Priam, the first of existences, father of many sons, the Absolute Reason; unseen, tremendous, immovable, in distant glory; yet himself amenable to that abysmal unity which Homer calls Fate, the source of all which is, yet in Itself Nothing, without predicate, unnameable.

'From It and for It the universal Soul thrills through the whole creation, doing the behests of that Reason from which it overflowed, unwillingly, into the storm and crowd of material appearances; warring with the brute forces of gross matter, crushing all which is foul and dissonant to itself, and clasping to its bosom the beautiful, and all wherein it discovers its own reflex; impressing on it its signature, reproducing from it its own likeness, whether star, or demon, or soul of the elect:—and yet, as the poet hints in anthropomorphic language, haunted all the while by a sadness—weighed down amid all its labours by the sense of a fate—by the thought of that First One from whom the Soul is originally descended; from whom it, and its Father, the Reason before it, parted themselves when they dared to think and act, and assert their own free will.

'And in the meanwhile, alas! Hector, the father, fights around, while his children sleep and feed; and he is away in the wars, and they know him not—know not that they, the individuals, are but parts of him, the universal. And yet at moments—oh! thrice blessed they whose celestial parentage has made such moments part of their appointed destiny—at moments flashes on the human child the intuition of the unutterable secret. In the spangled glory of the summer night—in the roar of the Nile-flood, sweeping down fertility in every wave—in the awful depths of the temple shrine—in the wild melodies of old Orphic singers, or before the images of those gods, of whose perfect beauty the divine theosophists of Greece

caught a fleeting shadow, and with the sudden might of artistic ecstasy smote it, as by an enchanter's wand,' into an eternal sleep of snowy stone—in these there flashes on the inner eye, a vision beautiful and terrible, of a force, an energy, a soul, an idea, one and yet million-fold, rushing through all created things, like the wind across a lyre, thrilling the strings into celestial harmony—one life-blood through the million veins of the universe, from one great unseen heart, whose thunderous pulses the mind hears far away, beating for ever in the abysmal solitude, beyond the heavens and the galaxies, beyond the spaces and the times, themselves but veins and runnels from its all-teeming sea.

'Happy, thrice happy they who once have dared, even though breathless, blinded with tears of awful joy, struck down upon their knees in utter helplessness, as they feel themselves but dead leaves in the wind which sweeps the universe—happy they who have dared to gaze, if but for an instant, on the terror of that glorious pageant; who have not, like the young Astyanax, clung shrieking to the breast of mother nature, scared by the heaven-wide flash of Hector's arms and the glitter of his rainbow-crest! Happy, thrice happy! even though their eyeballs, blasted by excess of light, wither to ashes in their sockets! Were it not a noble end to have seen Zeus, and die like Semele, burnt up by his glory? Happy, thrice happy! though their mind reel from the divine intoxication, and the hogs of Circe call them henceforth madmen and enthusiasts. Enthusiasts they are; for Deity is in them, and they in It. For the time, this burden of individuality vanishes, and recognising themselves as portions of the Universal Soul, they rise upward, through and beyond that Reason from whence the soul proceeds, to the fount of all—the ineffable and Supreme One—and seeing It, they become, by that act, portions of Its essence. They speak no more, but It speaks in them, and their whole being, transmuted by that glorious sunlight into whose rays they have dared, like the eagle, to gaze without shrinking, becomes an harmonious vehicle for the words of Deity, and passive itself, utters the secrets of the immortal gods. What

wonder if to the brute mass they seem like dreams? Be it so. . . . Smile if you will. But ask me not to teach you things unspeakable, above all sciences, which the word-battle of dialectic, the discursive struggles of reason can never reach, but which must be seen only, and when seen, confessed to be unspeakable. Hence, thou disputer of the Academy!—hence, thou sneering Cynic!—hence, thou sense-worshipping Stoic, who fanciest that the soul is to derive her knowledge from those material appearances which she herself creates! . . . hence—; and yet, no; stay and sneer, if you will. It is but a little time—a few days longer in this prison-house of our degradation, and each thing shall return to its own fountain; the blood-drop to the abysmal heart, and the water to the river, and the river to the shining sea; and the dew-drop which fell from heaven shall rise to heaven again, shaking off the dust-grains which weighed it down, thawed from the earth-frost which chained it here to herb and sward, upward and upward ever through stars and suns, through gods, and through the parents of the gods, purer and purer through successive lives, till it enters The Nothing, which is The All, and find its home at last.'—Vol. i. pp. 185—189.

The foregoing extract is a fair exposition of the prominent characteristics in the teaching of the more spiritual section of the New-Platonist school. The reader will have marked its subtile pantheism, its soaring mysticism, its strained and fanciful interpretation of the worshipped creations of the past. Like Swedenborgianism, such a system furnished a certain kind of intellectual ingenuity with constant employment. This chase after hidden meanings is as illimitable as it is worthless.

The idea which presided at the foundation of Alexandria was the establishment of a great Hellenic empire which should unite opposing races. Greece and Egypt were to be renewed together at the mouth of the Nile. The wisdom of Ptolemy Soter and of Philadelphus laboured to teach the pride of the Greek and the fanaticism of the Egyptian their first lesson in toleration. But it is not to the Museum of Alexandria, with all its munificent endow-

ments, that philosophy owed those last glories which illumined, but could not avert her fall. Plotinus taught at Rome, Proclus at Athens. The apartments of the Royal Institute were tenanted, for the most part, by men like Theon,—mathematicians, critics, and literati, who spent their days in laborious trifling,—who could collect and methodize, minutely commentate, or feebly copy, but who could originate little or nothing,—who were alike indifferent and unequal to the mighty questions on which hung the issue of the conflict between Greek conservatism and the new religion. Such men chained philosophy to the past and starved it—they offered up the present as a funeral victim at the obsequies of antiquity, and science, in their hands, perished, like the camel which the ancient Arabs tied to the tomb of a dead hero and left to linger and expire on the desert sand.

For full five centuries, from the days of Philo to the days of Proclus, Alexandrian philosophy, half rationalist, half mystical, endeavoured to reconcile the East and the West by one never-failing expedient—allegorical interpretation. The book of Genesis was to Philo what the *Iliad* was to Hypatia. In his treatise, *De Confusione Linguarum*, Philo declares that the sky the Babel-builders sought to reach with the top of their tower, is the mind, in which dwell the 'divine Powers.' Their futile attempts, he says, represent the presumption of those who place sense above intelligence, and think to storm the Intelligible World by the engine of the sensuous. Waller said that the troopers of the Parliament ought to be both faithful men and good riders,—the first, lest they should run away with their horses,—the second, lest their horses should run away with them. Philo fulfilled the former condition in his advocacy of what he deemed the truth. No disputatious Greek could cavil at the books of Moses without finding himself foiled at his own dialectic weapons by the learned Jew. In the latter, he fails, and the wings of his hippogryph, Allegory, bear him far away into the dimmest realms of Phantasy.

Plato pronounces Love the child of Poverty and Plenty—the

Alexandrian philosophy was the offspring of Reverence and Ambition. It combined an adoring homage to the departed genius of the age of Pericles, with a passionate credulous craving after a supernatural elevation. Its literary tastes and religious wants were alike imperative and irreconcileable. In obedience to the former, it disdained Christianity; impelled by the latter, it travestied Plato. But for that proud servility which fettered it to a glorious past, it might have recognised in Christianity the only satisfaction of its higher longings. Rejecting that, it could only establish a philosophic church on the foundation of Plato's school, and, forsaking while it professed to expound him, embrace the hallucinations of intuition and of ecstasy, till it finally vanishes at Athens amid the incense and the hocus-pocus of theurgic incantation. Neo-Platonism begins with theosophy—that is, a philosophy, the imagined gift of special revelation, the product of the inner light. But soon, finding this too abstract and unsatisfactory, impatient of its limitations, it seeks after a sign and becomes theurgic. As it degenerates, it presses more audaciously forward through the veil of the unseen. It must see visions, dream dreams, work spells, and call down deities, demigods, and demons, from their dwellings in the upper air. The Alexandrians were eclectics, because such reverence taught them to look back; mystics, because such ambition urged them to look up. They restore philosophy, after all its weary wanderings, to the place of its birth; and, in its second childhood, it is cradled in the arms of those old poetic faiths of the past, from which, in the pride of its youth, it broke away.

The mental history of the founder best illustrates the origin of the school. Plotinus, in A.D. 233, commences the study of philosophy in Alexandria, at the age of twenty-eight. His mental powers are of the concentrative rather than the comprehensive order. Impatient of negation he has commenced an earnest search after some truth which, however abstract, shall yet be positive. He pores over the Dialogues of Plato and the Metaphysics of Aristotle, day and night. To promote the growth of his 'soul-wings,' as Plato

counsels, he practises austerities his master would never have sanctioned. He attempts to live, what he learns to call, the 'angelic life;' the 'life of the disembodied in the body.' He reads with admiration the Life of Apollonius of Tyana, by Philostratus, which has recently appeared. He can probably credit most of the marvels recorded of that strange thaumaturgist, who, two hundred years ago, had appeared—a revived Pythagoras, to dazzle nation after nation through which he passed, with prophecy and miracle—who had travelled to the Indus and the Ganges, and brought back the supernatural powers of Magi and Gymnosophists, and who was said to have displayed to the world once more the various knowledge, the majestic sanctity, and the superhuman attributes, of the sage of Crotona. This portraiture of a philosophical hierophant—a union of the philosopher and the priest in an inspired hero, fires the imagination of. Plotinus. In the New-Pythagoreanism of which Apollonius was a representative, Orientalism and Platonism were alike embraced. Perhaps the thought occurs thus early to Plotinus —could I travel eastward I might drink myself at those fountain-heads of tradition, whence Pythagoras and Plato drew so much of their wisdom. Certain it is, that, with this purpose, he accompanied, several years subsequently, the disastrous expedition of Gordian against the Parthians, and narrowly escaped with life.

At Alexandria, Plotinus doubtless hears from Orientals there some fragments of the ancient eastern theosophy—doctrines concerning the principle of evil, the gradual development of the divine essence, and creation by intermediate agencies, none of which he finds in his Plato. He cannot be altogether a stranger to the lofty theism which Philo marred, while he attempted to refine, by the help of his 'Attic Moses.' He observes a tendency on the part of philosophy to fall back upon the sanctions of religion, and on the part of the religions of the day to mingle in a Deism or a Pantheism, which might claim the sanctions of philosophy. The signs of a growing toleration or indifferentism meet him on every side. Rome has long been a Pantheon for all nations, and gods and

provinces together have found in the capitol at once their Olympus and their metropolis. He cannot walk the streets of Alexandria without perceiving that the very architecture tells of an alliance between the religious art of Egypt and of Greece. All, except Jews and Christians, join in the worship of Serapis. Was not the very substance of which the statue of that god was made, an amalgam?—fit symbol of the syncretism which paid him homage. Once Serapis had guarded the shores of the Euxine, now he is the patron of Alexandria, and in him the attributes of Zeus and of Osiris, of Apis and of Plato, are adored alike by East and West. Men are learning to overlook the external differences of name and ritual, and to reduce all religions to one general sentiment of worship. For now more than fifty years, every educated man has laughed, with Lucian's satire in his hand, at the gods of the popular superstition. A century before Lucian, Plutarch had shown that some of the doctrines of the barbarians were not irreconcileable with the philosophy in which he gloried as a Greek. Plutarch had been followed by Apuleius, a practical eclectic, a learner in every school, an initiate in every temple, at once sceptical and credulous, a sophist and a devotee.

Plotinus looks around him, and inquires what philosophy is doing in the midst of influences such as these. Peripateticism exists but in slumber, under the dry scholarship of Adrastus and Alexander of Aphrodisium, the commentators of the last century. The New Academy and the Stoics attract youth still, but they are neither of them a philosophy so much as a system of ethics. Speculation has given place to morals. Philosophy is taken up as a branch of literature, as an elegant recreation, as a theme for oratorical display. Plotinus is persuaded that philosophy should be worship—speculation, a search after God—no amusement, but a prayer. Scepticism is strong in proportion to the defect or weakness of everything positive around it. The influence of Ænesidemus, who, two centuries ago, proclaimed universal doubt, is still felt in Alexandria. But his scepticism would break up the foundations of morality. What

is to be done? Plotinus sees those who are true to speculation surrendering ethics, and those who hold to morality abandoning speculation.

In his perplexity, a friend takes him to hear Ammonius Saccas. He finds him a powerful, broad-shouldered man, as he might naturally be, who not long before was to be seen any day in the sultry streets of Alexandria, a porter, wiping his brow under his burden. Ammonius is speaking of the reconciliation that might be effected between Plato and Aristotle. This eclecticism it is which has given him fame. At another time it might have brought on him only derision, now there is an age ready to give the attempt an enthusiastic welcome.

Let us venture, as Mr. Kingsley has done with Hypatia, to make him speak for himself, and imagine, as nearly as may be, the probable tenor of his lecture.

'What,' he cries, kindling with his theme, 'did Plato leave behind him, what Aristotle, when Greece and philosophy had waned together? The first, a chattering crew of sophists: the second, the lifeless dogmatism of the sensationalist. The self-styled followers of Plato were not brave enough either to believe or to deny. The successors of the Stagyrite did little more than reiterate their denial of the Platonic doctrine of ideas. Between them morality was sinking fast. Then an effort was made for its revival. The attempt at least was good. It sprang out of a just sense of a deep defect. Without morality what is philosophy worth? But these ethics must rest on speculation for their basis. The Epicureans and the Stoics, I say, came forward to supply that moral want. Each said, we will be practical, intelligible, utilitarian. One school, with its hard lesson of fate and self-denial; the other, with its easier doctrine of pleasure, more or less refined, were rivals in their profession of ability to teach men how to live. In each there was a certain truth, but I will honour neither with the name of a philosophy. They have confined themselves to mere ethical application—they are willing, both of them, to let first principles lie unstirred. Can

scepticism fail to take advantage of this? While they wrangle, both are disbelieved. But, sirs, can we abide in scepticism?—it is death. You ask me what I recommend. I say, travel back across the past. Out of the whole of that by-gone and yet undying world of thought, construct a system greater than any of the sundered parts. Repudiate these partial scholars in the name of their masters. Leave them to their disputes, pass over their systems, already tottering for lack of a foundation, and be it yours to show how their teachers join hands far above them. In such a spirit of reverent enthusiasm you may attain a higher unity, you mount in speculation, and from that height ordain all noble actions for your lower life. So you become untrue neither to experience nor to reason, and the genius of eclecticism will combine, yea, shall I say it, will surpass while it embraces, all the ancient triumphs of philosophy!'

Such was the teaching which attracted Longinus, Herennius, and Origen (not the father). It makes an epoch in the life of Plotinus. He desires now no other instructor, and is preparing to become himself a leader in the pathway Ammonius has pointed out. He is convinced that Platonism, exalted into an enthusiastic illuminism, and gathering about itself all the scattered truth upon the field of history; Platonism, mystical and catholic, can alone preserve men from the abyss of scepticism. One of the old traditions of Finland relates how a mother once found her son torn into a thousand fragments at the bottom of the River of Death. She gathered the scattered members to her bosom, and rocking to and fro, sang a magic song, which made him whole again, and restored the departed life. Such a spell the Alexandrian philosophy sought to work—thus to recover and re-unite the relics of antique truth dispersed and drowned by time.

Plotinus occupied himself only with the most abstract questions concerning knowledge and being. Detail and method—all the stitching and clipping of eclecticism, he bequeathed as the handicraft of his successors. His fundamental principle is the old *petitio principii* of idealism. Truth, according to him, is not the agree-

ment of our apprehension of an external object with the object itself—it is rather the agreement of the mind with itself. The objects we contemplate and that which contemplates, are identical for the philosopher. Both are thought; only like can know like; all truth is within us. By reducing the soul to its most abstract simplicity, we subtilise it so that it expands into the infinite. In such a state we transcend our finite selves, and are one with the infinite; this is the privileged condition of ecstasy. These blissful intervals, but too evanescent and too rare, were regarded as the reward of philosophic asceticism—the seasons of refreshing, which were to make amends for all the stoical austerities of the steep ascent towards the abstraction of the primal unity.

Thus the Neo-Platonists became ascetics and enthusiasts; Plato was neither. Where Plato acknowledges the services of the earliest philosophers—the imperfect utterances of the world's first thoughts, —Neo-Platonism (in its later period, at least) undertakes to detect, not the similarity merely, but the identity between Pythagoras and Plato, and even to exhibit the Platonism of Orpheus and of Hermes. Where Plato is hesitant or obscure, Neo-Platonism inserts a meaning of its own, and is confident that such, and no other, was the master's mind. Where Plato indulges in a fancy, or hazards a bold assertion, Neo-Platonism, ignoring the doubts Plato may himself express elsewhere, spins it out into a theory, or bows to it as an infallible revelation. Where Plato has the doctrine of Reminiscence, Neo-Platonism has the doctrine of Ecstasy. In the Reminiscence of Plato, the ideas the mind perceives are without it. Here there is no mysticism, only the mistake incidental to metaphysicians generally of giving an actual existence to mere mental abstractions. In Ecstasy, the ideas perceived are within the mind. The mystic, according to Plotinus, contemplates the divine perfections in himself; and, in the ecstatic state, individuality (which is so much imperfection), memory, time, space, phenomenal contradictions and logical distinctions all vanish. It is not until the rapture is past, and the mind, held in this strange

solution, is, as it were, precipitated on reality, that memory is again employed. Plotinus would say that Reminiscence could impart only inferior knowledge, because it implies separation between the subject and the object. Ecstasy is superior—is absolute, being the realization of their identity. True to this doctrine of absorption, the pantheism of Plotinus teaches him to maintain, alike with the Oriental mystic at one extreme of time, and with the Hegelian at the other, that our individual existence is but phenomenal and transitory. Plotinus, accordingly, does not banish reason, he only subordinates it to ecstasy where the Absolute is in question. It is not till the last that he calls in supernatural aid. The wizard king builds his tower of speculation by the hands of human workmen till he reaches the top story, and then summons his genii to fashion the battlements of adamant, and crown them with starry fire.

Plotinus, wrapt in his proud abstraction, cared nothing for fame. An elect company of disciples made for a time his world; ere long, his dungeon-body would be laid in the dust, and the divine spark within him set free, and lost in the Universal Soul. Porphyry entered his school fresh from the study of Aristotle. At first the audacious opponent of his master, he soon became the most devoted of his scholars. With a temperament more active and practical than that of Plotinus, with more various ability and far more facility in method and adaptation, with an erudition equal to his fidelity, blameless in his life, pre-eminent in the loftiness and purity of his ethics, he was well fitted to do all that could be done towards securing for the doctrines he had espoused that reputation and that wider influence to which Plotinus was so indifferent. His aim was twofold. He engaged in a conflict hand to hand with two antagonists at once, by both of whom he was eventually vanquished. He commenced an assault on Christianity without, and he endeavoured to check the progress of superstitious practice within the pale of paganism. His doctrine concerning ecstasy is less extravagant than that of Plotinus. The ecstatic state does not involve with him the

loss of conscious personality. He calls it a dream, in which the soul, dead to the world, rises to an activity that partakes of the divine. It is an elevation above human reason, human action, human liberty, yet no temporary annihilation, but rather an ennobling restoration or transformation of the individual nature. In his well-known letter to Anebon, he proposes a series of questions which indicate that thorough scepticism concerning the pretensions of theurgy which so much scandalized Iamblichus. The treatise of the latter, *De Mysteriis*, is an elaborate reply, under the name of Abammon, to that epistle.

Thus much concerning the doctrine of the theosophic or spiritualist section of the Neo-Platonists. Iamblichus is the leader and representative of the wonder-working and theurgic branch of the school. With this party a strange mixture of charlatanry and asceticism takes the place of those lofty but unsatisfying abstractions which absorbed Plotinus. They are, in some sort, the lineal descendants of those ἀγύρται of whom Plato speaks—itinerant venders of expiations and of charms—the Grecian prototypes of Chaucer's Pardonere. Yet nothing can exceed the power to which they lay claim. If you believe Iamblichus, the theurgist is the vehicle and instrument of Deity, all the subordinate potencies and dominions of the upper world are at his beck, for it is not a man but a God who mutters the words of might, and chants the prayer which shakes celestial thrones and makes the heavens bow. When the afflatus is upon him, fiery appearances are seen, sweetest melodies tremble through the air, heavy with incense, or deep discordant sounds betray some terrible presence tamed by the master's art. There are four great orders of spiritual existence peopling the unseen world—gods, demons or heroes, demi-gods, and souls. The adept knows at once to which class the glorious shape which confronts him may belong—for they appear always with the insignia of their office, or in a form consonant with the rank they hold in the hierarchy of spiritual natures. The appearances of gods are uniform (μονοειδῆ), those of demons various in their hue (ποικίλα).

Often when a god reveals himself, he hides sun and moon, and appears, as he descends, too vast for earth. Each order has gifts of its own to bestow on those who summon them. The gods confer health of body, power and purity of mind: the principalities which govern the sublunary elements impart temporal advantages. At the same time there exist evil demons—anti-gods, who are hostile to the aspirant, who afflict, if they can, both body and mind, and hinder our escape from the world of appearance and of sense.

It is not a little curious to observe the process by which a more refined and intellectual mysticism gives way to a more gross, and theosophy is superseded by theurgy, in Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism, and Romanism alike. At first, ecstasy is an indescribable state—any form or voice would mar and materialize it—the vague boundlessness of this exaltation, of that expanse of bliss and glory in which the soul seems to swim and lose itself, is not to be even hinted at by the highest utterance of mortal speech. But a degenerate age, or a lower order of mind, demands the detail and imagery of a more tangible marvel. The demand creates supply, and the mystic, deceiver or deceived, or both, most commonly begins to furnish out for himself and others a full itinerary of those regions of the unseen world which he has scanned or traversed in his moments of elevation. He describes the starred baldrics and meteor-swords of the aerial panoply—tells what forlorn shapes have been seen standing dark against a far depth of brightness, like stricken pines on a sunset horizon—what angelic forms, in gracious companies, alight about the haunts of men, thwarting the evil, and opening pathways for the good—what genii tend what mortals, and under what astral influences they work weal or woe—what dwellers in the middle air cover with embattled rows the mountain side, or fill some vast amphitheatre of silent inaccessible snow—how some encamp in the valley, under the pennons of the summer lightning, and others find a tented field where the slow wind unrolls the exhalations along the marsh, or builds a canopy of vapours—all is largely told—what ethereal heraldry marshals with its blazon the thrones and dominions

of the unseen realm—what giant powers and principalities among them darken with long shadow, or illumine with a winged wake of glory the forms of following myriads, their ranks and races, wars and destiny, as minutely registered as the annals of some neighbour province, as confidently recounted as though the seer had nightly slipped his bonds of flesh, and made one in their council or their battle.

Thus the metaphysical basis and the magical pretensions of Alexandrian mysticism are seen to stand in an inverse ratio to each other. Porphyry qualifies the intuitional principle of his master, and holds more soberly the theory of illumination. Iamblichus, the most superstitious of all in practice, diminishes still further the province of theosophy. He denies what both Plotinus and Porphyry maintained, that man has a faculty inaccessible to passion, and eternally active. Just in proportion as these men surrendered their lofty ideas of the innate power of the mind did they seek to indemnify themselves by recourse to supernatural assistance from without. The talisman takes the place of the contemplative reverie. Philosophic abstraction is abandoned for the incantations of the cabbalist; and as speculation droops superstition gathers strength.

Such are the leading features of that philosophical religionism which attempted to rival Christianity at Alexandria, and which strove to cope, in the name of the past, with the spiritual aims and the miraculous credentials of the new faith. What were the immediate causes of its failure? The attempt to piece with new cloth the old garment was necessarily vain. Porphyry endeavoured to refute the Christian, and to reform the pagan by a single stroke. But Christianity could not be repulsed, and heathendom would not be renovated. In vain did he attempt to substitute a single philosophical religion, which should be universal, for the manifold and popular polytheism of his day. Christian truth repelled his attack on the one side, and idolatrous superstition carried his defences on the other. The Neo-Platonists, moreover, volunteered their services as the champions of a paganism which did but partially acknowledge their advocacy. The philosophers were often objects of suspicion to

the emperor, always of dislike to the jealousy of the heathen priest. In those days of emperor-worship the emperor was sometimes a devouring deity, and, like the sacred crocodile of Egypt, more dangerous to his worshippers than to his foes, would now and then breakfast on a devotee. The Neo-Platonists defended paganism not as zealots, but as men of letters. They defended it because the old faith could boast of great names and great achievements in speculation, literature, and art, and because the new appeared barbarian in its origin, and humiliating in its claims. They wrote, they lectured, they disputed in favour of the temple, and against the church, not because they worshipped idols, but because they worshipped Plato. They exclaimed against vice, while they sought to conserve its incentives, so abundant in every heathen mythology, fondly dreaming that they could bring a clean thing out of an unclean. Their great doctrine was the unity and immutability of the abstraction they called God; yet they took their place as the conservators of polytheism. They saw Christianity denouncing every worship except its own; and they resolved to assert the opposite, accrediting every worship except that Christianity enjoined. They failed to observe in that benign intolerance of falsehood, which stood out as so novel a characteristic in the Christian faith, one of the credentials of its divine origin. They forgot that lip-homage paid to all religions is the virtual denial of each. They strove to combine religion and philosophy, and robbed the last of its only principle, the first of its only power. In their hands speculation lost its scientific precision, and deserted its sole consistent basis in the reason; for they compelled philosophy to receive a fantastic medley of sacerdotal inventions, and to labour, blinded and dishonoured, an enfeebled Samson in the prison-house of their eclecticism, that these might be woven together into a flimsy tissue of pantheistic spiritualism. On the other hand, the religions lost in the process whatever sanctity or authoritativeness may once have been theirs. This endeavour to philosophise superstition could only issue in the paradoxical product of a philosophy without reason,

and a superstition without faith. Lastly, the old aristocratic exclusiveness of Hellenist culture could hold its own no longer against the encroaching confusions of the time—least of all against a system which preached a gospel to the poor. In vain did heathen philosophy borrow from Christian spirituality a new refinement, and receive some rays of light from the very foe she sought to foil. In every path of her ambition she was distanced by the excellence, yea, by the very faults of her antagonist. Did Neo-Platonism take the higher ground, and seek in ecstasy union with the divine, many a Christian ascetic in the Thebaid laid claim to a union and an ecstasy more often enjoyed, more confidently asserted, more readily believed. Did she descend a step lower, to find assurance for herself or win repute with others, to the magical devotion and materialized mysticism of theurgic art, here, too, she was outdone, for the Christian Church could not only point to miracles in the past, which no one ventured to impugn, but was growing richer every day in relics and exorcisms, and in every species of saintly marvel. Every Christian martyr bequeathed a progeny of miracles to the care of succeeding generations. His bones were the dragons' teeth, which, sown in the grave, sprang up the armed men of the church militant—the supernatural auxiliaries of the faith for which he died; and his sepulchre became the corner-stone of a new church. Pagan theurgy found its wand broken, and its spells baffled, by the more potent incantations of Christian faith or Christian superstition. A barbaric art, compounded of every ancient jugglery of priestcraft, contended as vainly against the roused elements of that human nature which Christianity had stirred to its depths, as do the savage islanders of the Southern Sea against the hurricane, when, sitting in a dusky circle on the beach, they try, with wild noises, to sing down the leaping surf, and to lull the shrieking winds, that cover them with flying spray. Philosophy, which had always repelled the people, possessed no power to seclude them from the Christianity which sought them out. It is, perhaps, too much to say that it never attracted minds from the lower walks of life, but when it did so,

the influence it exercised was not really ameliorating or even diffusive. Mr. Kingsley has correctly exemplified, in the character of Eudæmon, the operation of philosophy on the vulgar mind. This little man, who keeps the parasols in the porch of Hypatia's lecture-room, has picked up sundry scraps of philosophy. He is, accordingly, just as disdainful of the herd about him, as the real philosophers, whom he apes, would necessarily be of himself. His frivolous and selfish pedantry is a perpetual satire on philosophic pretension. His philosophy, leaving his heart even as it was, imparts only a ridiculous inflation to his speech, and enables him to beat his wife with a high-sounding maxim on his lips. He resembles Andrew, the serving-man of the great scholar in Beaumont and Fletcher's play of the *Elder Brother*, who so delights to astound and mystify the cook with his learned phrases and marvellous relations of the scientific achievements of his master:—

> 'These are but scrapings of his understanding, Gilbert,
> With gods and goddesses, and such strange people,
> He treats and deals with in so plain a fashion,
> As thou dost with thy boy that draws thy drink,
> Or Ralph there, with his kitchen-boys and scalders.'

Such is the style in which Eudæmon discourses to the wondering Philammon, fresh from the desert, on the wisdom and the virtues of Hypatia. This windy fare of conceit and vanity, with a certain dog-like devotion to his mistress, is all that the transcendental diet of philosophy has vouchsafed him. Neither, in reality, were the young wits and dandies of Alexandria much more effectually nourished in virtue than this humble doorkeeper at the gates of wisdom. Bitterly did Hypatia complain that her pupils remained dead to those pure aspirations which exalted her own nature. They listened, admired, and were amused; idleness had found a morning's entertainment; they talked of virtue, but they practised vice. While Hypatia, like Queen Whims, in Rabelais' *Kingdom of Quintessence*, fed only on categories, abstractions, second intentions, antitheses, metempsychoses, transcendant prolepsies, 'and such other light food,' her

admirers, like Pantagruel and his friends, did more than justice to all the substantial materials of gluttony and drunkenness. In short, the very struggles made by heathendom in the effort to escape its doom, served only to disclose more fatally its weakness, and to show to all that the doom was merited. In one of the stories of the *Gesta Romanorum*, we are told of a warden at a city gate who was empowered to receive a penny from every passenger who was one-eyed, hunchbacked, or afflicted with certain diseases. A hump-backed man appeared one day, who refused to pay the toll; the warden laid hands on him; in the scuffle his cap fell off, his clothes were torn, it was discovered that he had but one eye, and, finally, that he was a sufferer under each of the diseases amenable to the fine, so that he was mulcted, at last, in five pennies instead of one. Such has been the history of systems, political or religious, which have attempted, when their time was come, to resist the execution of the sentence. They have persisted in pretending to teach when they had nothing to impart,—in arrogating an authority already disowned,—or in obtruding a service which the world required no longer; and the more protracted and obstinate such endeavours, the more signal has been their overthrow, the more conspicuous the sickly feebleness of their corruption, the heavier the penalties they have been compelled at last to pay.

The career of Neo-Platonism, as we have now attempted to describe it, is faithfully traced by Mr. Kingsley in the character of Hypatia, in her aspirations, her mental struggles, her bitter disappointment. He might have exhibited the philosophical aspects of the time, as it were, side by side with the story, in the way of long speeches and occasional disquisitions. He might, on the other hand, have made Hypatia an abstraction—an impersonation of the school she represents. Either course would have been easier than the one he has chosen—would have been, in fact, the danger of an inferior workman. In the first case, the book would have lacked interest, in the second, nature. But Mr. Kingsley has contrived, with no little art, to render the incidents of the story themselves indicative

of the character and fortunes of the philosophy he has to depict,—to make Hypatia human and real, and, at the same time, to exhibit in her individual history the strength, the weakness, and the inevitable issue of that philosophic and pagan element which, in the fifth century, leavened so large a section of the social system. In this respect, his tale may be read as history, and those best acquainted with the period he handles will be the last to accuse his portraiture of untruthfulness. High, indeed, is the office of the novelist who endeavours not merely to recall the dress and manners of a bygone age, but to pierce into the heart of society, and show us how the various classes of mankind were looking at those great questions concerning good and evil, right and wrong, which are the same in their moment for all time. Such an instructor widens the door of knowledge, and introduces to the lessons of the past that large number who, in our hurrying headlong days, have neither the time, the culture, nor the curiosity to seek them in the original records. Our literature is less rich in such productions than it should be, and we trust it will receive farther contributions from the same hand to which we owe *Hypatia.*

Almost at the outset of the story, Hypatia is made to feel the insufficiency of the philosophy in which she glories. To aid his schemes of usurpation, Orestes, the shrewd and selfish voluptuary, has offered her his hand. She loathes the man,—but, as Empress of Africa, she might abolish the church of Alexandria, and restore the worship of Athene. She hesitates. Spiritual as her philosophy is, it cannot teach her that the least wrong may not be excused by the largest advantage, and she submits—another Iphigenia—expediency her cruel Agamemnon. She writes the letter which contains the fatal consent, and tries to resume her *Commentary on Plotinus:*—

'Alas! what were all the wire-drawn dreams of metaphysics to her in that real and human struggle of the heart? What availed it to define the process by which individual souls emanated from the universal one, while her own soul had, singly and on its own re-

sponsibility, to decide so terrible an act of will? or to write fine words with pen and ink about the immutability of the human Reason, while her own reason was left there to struggle for its life amid a roaring, shoreless waste of doubts and darkness? Oh, how grand, and good, and logical it had all looked half an hour ago! And how irrefragably she had been deducing from it all, syllogism after syllogism, the non-existence of evil!—how it was but a lower form of good, one of the countless products of the one great, all-pervading mind which could not err or change, only so strange and recondite in its form as to excite antipathy in all minds but that of the philosopher, who learned to see the stem which connected the apparently bitter fruit with the perfect root from which it sprung. Could she see the stem there?—the connexion between the pure and supreme Reason, and the hideous caresses of the debauched and cowardly Orestes? Was not that evil, pure, unadulterated with any vein of good, past, present, or future?'—Vol. i. p. 77.

Again, in her dialogue with Orestes (one of the best in the book) her ideal heathenism is brought face to face with the hideous reality. She would fain make paganism, in its most degenerate days, what it had never been in its best, and restore it purified from blood and lust. To re-establish heathendom she must have power,—to obtain power she must please the people,—to please the people she must give her consent to massacre, and her presence to shame, the arena must reek with the blood of the Libyan prisoners, and Pelagia must dance Venus Anadyomene. To this she must reconcile herself, and, after all, whispers her philosophy, ought not the intellectual few to be the real rulers, governing the masses for their good; and in what way can those degraded natures, in whom no divine spark of life has been awakened, be possibly controlled, but by indulging them in their animal appetites? Another compromise, another degradation, and meanwhile that inexplicable thing, Christianity, exhibits multitudes far surpassing in holiness (because more benevolent) the highest attainments of philosophic purity,—has won, maintains, daily extends her power, without being forced to

stoop to such base compliance. It was Christianity which had done most to give real footing to such morality as Hypatia taught, but taught in vain. Why was it so strong, and she so weak? Why could she not raise the soul of heathenism without that gross, corrupt body?

Such were the doubts that darkened about her as she felt that, in spite of every hope and effort, the sun of heathendom seemed inevitably setting; as she could find only evil means wherewith to combat evil, while Zeus and Pallas gave no sign, and appeared regardless, as the epicurean infidel had declared them, of the triumph of their destroyer, of the tears and the sacrifice of their last and truest votary. Philammon, too, discovers that even Hypatia cannot stoop from her pride of purity to succour his outcast sister,—that philosophy has no mercy to proclaim for publicans and sinners,—that, at his sorest need, it abandons him, freezes pity with the name of destiny, and mocks, with a selfish abstraction, the pleading misery of his love and fear. As a last resource,—to reassure, if possible, her failing faith,—to grasp a something beyond her own thoughts, Hypatia has recourse to the ecstasy Plotinus taught. She discovers, to her dismay, that even the mystic trance brings her nothing from without; that she herself is her own object, even there; that she does but project the phantom of her own misery on the mysterious void. A step lower yet — desperate, but natural — she accepts the aid of Miriam's theurgic art, who professes to summon her a god in visible human form. But, alas! the Apollo proves a real, but too palpable man; and Hypatia, in an agony of shame and resentment, finds herself the victim of a shameful trick.

Raphael Aben-Ezra is one of those powerful characters in which Mr. Kingsley is most successful. His own sympathies manifestly lie most strongly with natures daring and robust both in mind and body. The chapter, entitled, 'The Bottom of the Abyss,' which describes the descent of Raphael from depth to depth of doubt, till he follows his dog as the best teacher he has, is a fine illustration of the utter inability of the most ingenious theories of the universe

to satisfy minds of the largest capacity. He has nothing of the sentimentalism whose luxuriant growth could conceal, in the case of Hypatia, the gaps and crevices of her philosophic structure. To his keen insight, allegorical mathematics, the spiritual significance of conic sections, the divine lessons unfolded in the petals of the flower of Isis, appear, as they actually are,—the idlest child's play. He looks both sides of a question too fully in the face to be a common sceptic, only incredulous of what he resolves to deny, and blindly credulous of certain phantasms created in its place. A true doubter, he doubts concerning his doubts, and when, for the first time, he beholds near at hand that beautiful thing, a consistent Christian life, the vision shines on a mind as clear of the prejudices of scepticism as of the prejudices of faith—a mere *tabula rasa*, and awakes a hope which grows into conviction. It is because they lack the breadth of view exhibited in such a character, that men like Newman and Parker imagine they have found a medium and a resting-place in their deistic intuitionalism, in a subjective religion of sentiment, which enables them to believe what they will without giving a reason to any man—a religion which bows to the witness of the fancy without a question, and disdains the testimony of history with as little question also—as though men could only be deceived by others, and never by themselves. Raphael says—

'I don't want to possess a faith. I want a faith which will possess me. And if I ever arrived at such a one, believe me, it would be by some such practical demonstration as this very tent has given me.

'This tent?

'Yes, sir, this tent; within which I have seen you and your children lead a life of deeds as new to me the Jew, as they would be to Hypatia the Gentile. I have watched you for many a day, and not in vain. When I saw you, an experienced officer, encumber your flight with wounded men, I was only surprised. But since I have seen you, and your daughter, and strangest of all, your gay young Alcibiades of a son, starving yourselves to feed those poor

ruffians—performing for them, day and night, the offices of menial slaves—comforting them, as no man ever comforted me—blaming no one but yourselves, caring for every one but yourselves, sacrificing nothing but yourselves; and all this without hope of fame or reward, or dream of appeasing the wrath of any god or goddess, but simply because you thought it right . . . . when I saw that, sir, and more which I have seen; and when, reading in this book here, I found most unexpectedly those very grand moral rules which you were practising, seeming to spring unconsciously, as natural results, from the great thoughts, true or false, which had preceded them; then, sir, I began to suspect that the creed which produces such deeds as I have watched within the last few days, might have on its side not merely a slight preponderance of probabilities, but what we Jews used once to call, when we believed in it—or in anything—the mighty power of God.'—Vol. ii. p. 34.

To turn now from heathenism—divided between a fanciful spiritualism and a grovelling superstition—between a thoughtful scepticism and a thoughtless indifference—doomed alike in its belief and in its disbelief,—to its successful rival, the Church. Christianity in the fifth century was disfigured by a wide-spread corruption, but paganism was in no condition either to rival its excellences or to take advantage of its faults. Only too many of the follies associated with heathen worship were conserved by incorporation in that church which made a ruin of every heathen shrine. There is an Indian valley in which it is said that gigantic trees have pierced and rent the walls of a long-deserted idol temple. That resistless vegetation, with its swelling girth and gnarled arms, has anticipated the work of time; but it has been itself distorted while it has destroyed. Large slabs and fragments of stone are encased in the wood, and the twisted bark discovers here and there, among the shadows of the leaves, groups of petty gods which its growth has partially enclosed. Thus did it happen with the mighty tree that sprang from the grain of mustard-seed, when by degrees it had received into its substance, or embraced in its development, many

an adornment from those chambers of imagery which its youthful vigour had riven and overthrown. The heathen philosopher might, with some show of justice, retort on the Christians the charge of idolatry when he saw them prostrate before an image, and confident in the miraculous virtues of a relic or a tomb. But the reproach availed him nothing, for the power of conviction lay with the adversary after all. He might accuse the Christian, as Mr. Martineau accuses Paley, of representing the Deity as a retired mechanist,—a creator withdrawn from the work of his own hands to a far-off heaven; but the evil was not amended by depriving the Divine Nature of personality and diffusing it pantheistically throughout the universe. The dispute between the heathen and the Christian on that question amounted to this—Did God create the universe by willing or by being it? (τῷ βούλεσθαι, or τῷ εἶναι.) If the latter, man has a criminal for a Deity; if the former (as the Church said), the mystery might be fathomless, but religion was at least possible. The Neo-Platonist might point to parallels, answering plausibly at least, to many features of the Christian doctrine, in the old religions of mankind. But the labour was as idle then as now, for this, at any rate, the adversary of our faith could not and cannot deny, that Christianity was the first to seek out and to elevate the forgotten and degraded masses of mankind.

A survey of such parallels is of service only as indicative of the adaptation of Christianity to those obscure longings of the ancient world which are better understood by us than by themselves. The likeness observable between some of their ideas and those contained in the Christian revelation, is that of the dim and distorted morning shadow to the substance from which it is thrown. We see that their religious notions were not the nutriment their souls really needed, but substitutes for, or anticipations of, such veritable food. The pellets of earth, eaten by the Otomacs and the negroes, are no proof that clay can afford nourishment to man's system. They are the miserable resources of necessity, they deaden the irritability of the stomach and allay the gnawings of hunger, but they can

impart no sustenance. The religious philosophies of the old world could, in like manner, assuage a painful craving for a time, but they could not reinforce the life-blood, and resuscitate, as healthful food, the faint and emaciated frame. Over against all points of similarity is to be set this striking contrast,—for that forlorn deep, the popular mind, Christianity had a message of love and power, while heathen wisdom had none. The masses of antiquity resemble the cairn-people of northern superstition—a race of beings said to dwell among the tombs, playing sadly on their harps, lamenting their captivity, and awaiting wistfully the great day of restitution. They call on those who pass their haunts, and ask if there is salvation for them. If man answers yes, they play blithely all the night through; if he says, 'You have no Redeemer,' they dash their harps upon the stones, and crouch, silent and weeping, in the gloomy recesses of their cavern. Such a dark and ignorant sighing to be renewed was heard from time to time from those tarrying spirits in prison among the untaught multitudes of ancient time. They questioned philosophy, and at her cold denial shrank away, and hid themselves again in their place of darkness. They questioned Christianity, and at her hopeful answer they began to sing.

Once more, the enemy of the Cross was reduced in that time, as in our own, to the inconsistency of extending the largest charity possible to every licentious and cruel faith that had led man's wandering farther yet astray, while he refuses even common candour to the belief of the Christian in his Saviour. Similarly, Mr. Parker must speak with tenderness of those multifarious types of the religious sentiment which have identified homicide with worship and deity with lust; but when he comes across an evangelical—farewell calm philosophy, and welcome bitterness and bile! Mr. Parker might reply, in the nineteenth century, as Theon would have replied in the fifth—'But those Christians are so intolerant, and will have it that everything unchristian is ungodly; they will not

suffer us to place their religion among the other creations of man's devotional aspiration, and to install it in the Pantheon of our philosophic empire with the rest.' Of course not, Christianity could exist on no other terms. It refused, in the days of the Cæsars, to be stabled in the Capitol among the hybrid and the bestial forms which made that centre of the world the gallery of its religious monstrosities. It declared that, as the true religion, it was the only one; that its claim was fatal to all others; and it disdained to receive, in company with a thousand falsehoods, the divided patronage of imperial policy. Just as that emperor-worship of declining Rome would fain have set the adoration of man in the place of that of God,—would readily, in its catholic state-craft, have accepted the homage of Christianity as of all other creeds—substituting human sanctions for divine; so our modern sentimental Deism would herd Christianity with all other faiths in a common philosophic pasture, and make religion the worship of man rather than of God. The difference in our time is, that the human authority is not now to be centered in any Divus Cæsar, or perpetuated by the gaudy celebration of an apotheosis; it is to be divided among an elect priesthood of letters. It is asserted, not by the sword but by the pen; not by the municipal organization of an empire, but by the body corporate of publishers; and the Infinite is to speak, not through the carrier of a sceptre and wearer of the purple, but through an author in his study or a professor in his chair.

Mr. Kingsley has drawn no veil over the gross abuses which rendered the church of the fifth century so mournful a departure from the simplicity of more stormy times. He brings out to view the spiritual pride, the wasteful asceticism, the coarse fanaticism, of the church in the desert;—the intrigue and the faction, the ambition and the covetousness, of the church in the city. Yet, amidst it all, both in the wilderness and in the capital, we are permitted to catch glimpses of a piety strong in its simple-mindedness, however narrow;—of a principle, working in the lives of numbers, so holy,

so benign, as still to vindicate the promised presence of the Highest with his people. Great as the actual corruption may have been, the evils it displaced were greater yet. Many of the faults with which Christianity was chargeable were accounted such only by her own standard. They were short-comings in a virtue, hitherto, not simply unattained, but undesired. They were stains upon her garment, only visible by the light she herself had brought into the world.

In a very touching passage, Mr. Kingsley depicts the anguish of Pelagia when, awakened to contrition, she learns that the horrors of hell-fire are to be averted only by the life-long misery of a hermit's cell. Already had men learnt, in such cases, to demand the violation of our nature as the condition of that salvation, which is without money and without price. This same 'doctrine of devils,' as Paul calls it, had already all but driven Aben-Ezra out into his desperate sea of doubt again, just as his bark was entering the Christian haven. Pelagia is like one of the Undines or Sylphs of the Rosicrucian philosophy, a creature without a soul. These creatures of the elements, according to the Count de Gabalis, obtain an immortal soul by love with one of human race. The life of right and wrong at last awakens in Pelagia's heart; she knows that she has sinned, and yet she loves. Baptized in her infancy, only by the most dreadful penance can she win return into the awful sanctuary of the church. Ignorantly has she lived in guilt, now, in a moment, the light of knowledge is the flame of perdition —this newly discovered immortality is to be an immortality of torment. In the eyes of the church she is an apostate only to be reclaimed through a process of torture more dreadful to such a nature than the iron whips, the glowing pincers, the cautery, and the knife, with which, in Spenser's *House of Holinesse*, that stern leech Patience disciplines the Red-cross Knight, while his groans and lamentations pierce the heart of the weeping Una. Pelagia cannot tear love from her heart, yet what she has heard of a threatened hell and an angry God plunges her into a despair, which

is about to seek relief in suicide. The voice which Mr. Kingsley has given to such anguish is profoundly affecting,—it is a passage in the tragedy of the soul, but too real, full to overflowing of pity and of terror. She exclaims:—

'Ay, but God despises me too, and hates me. He will send me to eternal fire. Philammon said so—though he was my brother. The old monk said so—though he wept as he said it. . . . . The flames of hell for ever! Oh, not for ever! Great, dreadful God! Not for ever! Indeed, I did not know! No one taught me about right and wrong, and I never knew that I had been baptized—indeed, I never knew! And it was so pleasant—so pleasant to be happy, and praised, and loved, and to see happy faces round me. How could I help it? The birds there who are singing in the darling, beloved court—they do what they like, and Thou art not angry with them for being happy? And Thou wilt not be more cruel to me than to them, great God—for what did I know more than they? Thou who hast made the beautiful sunshine, and the pleasant, pleasant world, and the flowers, and the birds—Thou wilt not send me to burn for ever? Will not a hundred years be punishment enough—or a thousand? Oh, God! is not this punishment enough already,—to have to leave him just as—just as I am beginning to long to be good, and to be worthy of him? . . . Oh, have mercy—mercy—mercy—and let me go after I have been punished enough! Why may I not turn into a bird, or even a worm, and come back again out of that horrible place, to see the sun shine, and the flowers grow once more? Oh, am I not punishing myself already? Will not this help to atone? . . . . Yes—I will die!—and perhaps so God may pity me!'—Vol. ii. p. 321.

It is a painful study to mark the growth of these harsh exaggerations in Christian teaching—to see priestly austerity taking the place of merciful holiness—the entrance to eternal life narrowed and sentinelled by priestcraft, and a morbid imagination peopling the realm of future judgment with terrors that make it the eternal

torture-chamber of God, where the fellest ingenuity of the inquisitor is transcended immeasurably, and world without end, in the misery of countless myriads. It is sad to watch how, through generation after generation, the form of Sacerdotalism advances with the night, and scatters, with the sweep of her gorgeous and bloody vestments, the last embers of religious freedom and religious life. But those who marvel at this melancholy history would do well to remember what that material was with which Christianity had to work, and what were, and ever must be, the conditions under which it is ordained to labour.

The dialogue of Aben Ezra with Cyril is admirably suggestive of what was at hand,—of times when the hierarchy would claim for themselves the money, the management, and the merit of all benevolence,—when men would endeavour to set up a religious world irresponsible to the secular, would destroy morality in the name of God, and trample, in the lawlessness of ecclesiastical ambition, on laws human and laws divine, and when having, for the honour and glory of God, sufficiently aggrandized themselves, they would for awhile succeed in establishing the kingdom of the devil and calling it the kingdom of heaven.

The story melts off, at its termination, into myth, in a manner perfectly true to the legend-loving spirit of the times, though, perhaps, little satisfactory to the sympathies of most of its readers. It may be true, that in Africa, as then it was, asceticism might urge the plea of necessity for its selfish flight from human sin and misery, with more force than in any other place or time. The monasticism of the East, while far less beneficent in its character, had perhaps a better excuse for its origin than that of the West. But we should rather have seen Philammon spending the remainder of his days in the endeavour to be of some use at Alexandria, than subsiding, after all, into the saintly and successful casuist among the torrid wastes of Scetis.

It now remains for us briefly to trace the influence of the Neo-Platonism of Alexandria on the Christianity by which it

was vanquished—to mark the workings of its principle within the church, and afterwards the revival of its spirit in opposition to it.

The Platonism of the Middle Ages, be it remembered, was not so much the doctrine of Plato as of Plotinus. The old Greeks were lost to the monastic world, and were known only through the Alexandrians, who corrupted the philosophy they professed to interpret. Neo-Platonism was studied through the medium of Augustine on the one side, and the Pseudo-Dionysius on the other; was transmitted principally by writers like Apuleius and Boethius. To the monkish scribes of the scriptorium, the æsthetic culture, so precious in the eyes of Plato, the natural science so elaborately investigated by the Stagyrite, were matters of indifference. The Christian writers only assimilated from antiquity what seemed to fall within the province of the church. The ecclesiastical world took Augustine's word for it, that Plotinus had enunciated the real esoteric doctrine of Plato. They believed, on the authority of the Neo-Platonists, that Aristotle and Plato were not the enemies which had been supposed. They viewed the school of Aristotle as the forecourt, leading to the mystic shadows of that grove of Hecademus, wherein Plato was supposed to discourse of heaven and obscurely to adore the Christian's God.

Realism and Asceticism were the common ground of the Christian and the Neo-Platonist. The same enthusiasm for abstractions, the same contempt for the body and the world of sense, animated the philosophy of the old world and the theology of the new. A spiritual aristocracy was substituted in Europe for the intellectual aristocracy of Greece. The exclusive spirit of the sage, with his chosen group of esoteric followers,—of the hierophant, with his imposing ritual and his folding gates of brass, excluding the profane, passed from paganism into the Christian priesthood. The church, too, learnt to glory in a treasured potency and secret doctrine, which must be veiled from the vulgar eye,—professed to speak but in the symbolism of painting, of sculpture, of ceremony, to the grosser

apprehensions of the crowd, and transformed the Eucharist into an Eleusinian mystery.

In the eastern church the Neo-Platonists had their revenge. With a fatal sway they ruled from their urns, when dead, that Christianity which had banished them while living. It was not long after the death of Proclus, about the time when the factions of Constantinople were raging most furiously—when rival ecclesiastics headed city riots with a rabble of monks, artisans, and bandit soldiery at their heels—when the religious world was rocking still with the ground-swell which followed those stormy synods in which Palestine and Alexandria, Asia and Byzantium, tried their strength against each other, that a certain nameless monk was busy in his cell fabricating sundry treatises and letters which were to find their way into the church under the all-but apostolic auspices of Dionysius the Areopagite. These writings are an admixture of the theosophy of Proclus with the doctrines of the church; writings in which the heathen bears to the Christian element the same proportion as the sack to the bread in Falstaff's account. The pantheistic emanation-doctrine of the New Platonists; the evolution of the universe, through successive orders of existence, from the primal Nothing called God; and the returning tendency of all being towards that point of origin (the *πρόοδος* and *ἐπιστροφή*), are dogmas reproduced without any substantial alteration. The ideal hierarchy of Proclus does service, with a nominal change, as the celestial hierarchy of Dionysius. The Divine Word is removed from man by a long intervening chain of heavenly principalities and ecclesiastical functionaries,—becomes little more than an unintelligible museum of archetypes, and is rather the remote Illuminator than the present Saviour of mankind. The tendency of the whole system was to represent the clerical order as an exact antitype of the ideal or celestial kingdom of God in heaven. Its aim was obviously to centre all truth and all power in the symbolism and the offices of the Greek church. Hence the success of the imposture. It was the triumph of sacerdotalism. Under the name of Dionysius,

Proclus was studied and commentated by many generations of dreaming monks. Under that name he conferred omnipotence on those Christian priests whom he had cursed in his heart, while reading lectures and performing incantations at Athens. Under that name he contributed most largely to those influences which held the religious world of the east in a state of stagnant servitude for nine hundred years.

In the West these doctrines have a very different history. It is a remarkable fact, that the ideas of the Alexandrian thinkers have operated powerfully, under various forms, both to aggravate and to oppose the corruptions of Christianity. In the ninth century John Scotus Erigena found time to translate Dionysius into Latin, while the Northmen were pillaging and burning up the Seine, gibbeting prisoners by scores under the eyes of the degenerate descendants of Charlemagne, and while monks and priests were everywhere running away with relics, or jumping for safety into sewers. But the spirits of Plotinus and of Proclus were now to become the ghostly tutors of a vigorous race of minds. The pantheistic system constructed by Erigena on the old Alexandrian basis was original and daring. The seeds he sowed gave birth to a succession of heretics who were long a thorn in the side of the corrupt hierarchy of France. Even where this was not the case, Platonism and mysticism together formed a party in the church, the sworn foes of mere scholastic quibbling, of an arid and lifeless orthodoxy, and, at last, of the more glaring abuses which had grown up with ecclesiastical pretension. The Alexandrian doctrine of emanation was abandoned, its pantheism was softened or removed, but its allegorical interpretation, its exaltation, true or false, of the spirit above the letter—all this was retained, and became the stronghold from which the ardent mystic assailed the formal schoolman, and the more enlightened advocate of the religious life exposed the hollowness of mere orthodoxy and ritualism. Thus many a thought which had its birth at Alexandria, passing through the last writers of the empire or the fathers of the church, was received, after a refining process, into hearts glowing

with a love that heathendom could never know, put to higher and more beneficent uses, and made to play its part again upon the stage of time in a guise of which its author could not even dream.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Neo-Platonism was revived in Italy by a class of men possessing much more in common with its original founders. At that period not a trace of the old conflict between Paganism and Christianity was found surviving in the south of Europe. The church had become heathen, and the superstition of polytheism was everywhere visible in her religious practice. The temples were now churches; Christian legends took the place of the old mythology; saints and angels became to the mass what the ancient gods had been, and were honoured by similar offerings; the carnival represented the saturnalia, and, in short, so far had the old faith and the new become united, that no ancient Roman returning from his grave, and beholding the shrines, the processions, the images, the votive tablets, the lamps, the flowers, could have failed for a moment to recognise the identity of the Eternal City. Now this world of Christianised heathendom was represented, in philosophy and letters, by men who had inherited both the doctrines and the spirit of Neo-Platonism; by men to whom the earnest religious movement of the north presented itself as the same mysterious, barbaric, formidable foe which primitive Christianity had been to the Alexandrians. Thus the old conflict between pagan and Christian—the man of taste, and the man of faith—the man who lived for the past, and the man who lived for the future—was renewed, in the sixteenth century, between the Italian and the German.

The Neo-Platonist Academy of Florence was not a whit behind the Alexandrians in the worship they paid to Plato. He was extolled from the pulpit, as well as from the chair, as the stronghold of Christian evidence. He was declared replete with Messianic prophecy. Ficinus maintained that lessons from Plato should make a part of the church service, and that texts should be taken from the Parmenides and the Philebus. The last hours of Socrates, the

cock offered to Æsculapius, the cup of poison, and the parting words of blessing, were made typical of the circumstances attending the Saviour's passion. Before the bust of Plato, as before the image of a saint, a lamp burned night and day in the study of Ficinus. The hymns of Orpheus were sung to the lyre once more, to lull those passions which apostolic exhortation had done so little to subdue. Gemisthus Pletho blended with the philosophy of Plato the wisdom of the East and the mythology of Greece, in the spirit of the Alexandrian eclectics. Like them, he dreamed of a universal religion, which should harmonize, in a philosophic worship, all human creeds. Cusanus renovated the mystic numbers of Pythagoras, discovered new mysteries in the Tetractys, and illustrated spiritual truth by the acute and the obtuse angle. But Ficinus did not restore the Athenian Plato, nor Nicholas of Cusa, the Samian Pythagoras. The Plato of the first was the Plato of Plotinus; the Pythagoras of the second was the Pythagoras of Hierocles. Pico of Mirandola, the Admirable Crichton of his time, endeavoured to combine scholasticism with the Cabbala, to reconcile the dialectics of Aristotle and the oracles of Chaldæa; and produced, in his Heptaplus, an allegorical interpretation of the Mosaic account of the Creation, which would have seemed too fanciful in the eyes of Hypatia herself. Patritius sought the sources of Greek philosophy in Zoroaster and Hermes, translated and edited the works which Neo-Platonists had fabricated under their names, and wrote to Gregory XIV., praying that Aristotle might be banished the schools, and Hermes, Asclepius, and Zoroaster appointed in his place, as the best means of advancing the cause of religion, and reclaiming the heretical Germans.

Protestantism was too strong for these scholars, just as Christianity had been too strong for the Alexandrians. Their feebleness sprang from the very same cause; their whole position was strikingly similar. They were the philosophic advocates of a religion in which they had themselves lost faith. They attempted to reconcile a corrupt philosophy and a corrupt religion, and made both worse.

Their love of literature and art was confined to a narrow circle of courtiers and literati; and while the Lutheran pamphlets, in the vernacular, set all the north in a flame, the philosophic refinements of the Florentine dilettanti were aristocratic, exclusive, and powerless. Their intellectual position was fatal to sincerity, their social condition equally so to freedom. The despotism of the Roman emperors was more easily evaded by a philosopher of ancient times than the tyranny of a Visconti or a D'Este, by a scholar at Milan or Ferrara. It was the fashion to patronize men of letters, but the natural return of subservience and flattery was rigorously exacted. The Italians of the fifteenth century had long ceased to be familiar with the worst horrors of war; and Charles VIII., with his ferocious Frenchmen, appeared to them another Attila. Each Italian state underwent, on its petty scale, the fate of imperial Rome, and the Florentine Academy could not survive for a twelvemonth its princely master, Lorenzo de Medici. The philosophic and religious conservatism of Florence was thus as destitute of real vitality, of all self-sustaining power, as its prototype at Alexandria. The Florentine Platonists, moreover, did not exhibit that austerity of manners which gave Plotinus and Porphyry no little authority even among those to whom their speculations were utterly unintelligible. Had Romanism been unable to find defenders more thoroughly in earnest, the shock she then received must have been her death-blow; she must have perished, as Paganism perished. But, wise in her generation, she took her cause out of the hands of a religious philosophy, committed it to the ascetic and the enthusiast, and, strong in resources heathendom could never know, passed her hour of peril, and proved that her hold on the passions and terrors of mankind were still invincible. The Platonists of Alexandria and of Florence both were twilight men; but the former were men of the evening, the latter men of the morning twilight. The passion for erudition, which followed the revival of letters, might be wasted, south of the Alps, on trifles; it was consecrated to the loftiest service in the north. The lesson conveyed in the parallel we have

attempted to draw is a grave one; twice has the effort been made to render the abstractions of a philosophized religion a power among mankind—in each case without success. The attempt to refine away what is distinctive of a revelation, real or imaginary, and to subtilize the residuum into a sentimental theism, has always failed. Such a system must leave the indifferent many as they were, and superstition is unchecked. It must excite the disdain of the earnest few, as a profane and puerile trifling with the most momentous questions which can occupy the mind of man. As its inconsistencies become apparent, it will always be found to strengthen the hands of the parties it professes to oppose. It must urge the higher class of minds into a thorough and impartial, instead of a one-sided scepticism, and so reinforce the ranks of consistent and absolute unbelief. It must abandon minds of a lower order to all those religious corruptions which lull the conscience, and gratify the passions. It has done nothing to reform the world; and, never strong enough long to oppose a serious obstacle to progress, it has been suffered repeatedly to die out of itself. Such examples in the past should much diminish the dread which many feel of that would-be religious scepticism among ourselves which essays to emasculate the truths of revelation, much as the Alexandrian and Florentine Platonists proposed to etherealize the myths of polytheism and the doctrines of Christianity into a vague sentiment of worship.

While the theosophy of the Alexandrian school enjoyed a revival in the hands of men of letters, its theurgy was destined to impart an impulse to the occult science of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It is not a little interesting to trace the same mental phenomena at the entrance of the European world on the middle ages, and at its exit from them. We see the same syncretism which confounded the Oriental and Hellenic conceptions together, the same endeavour to hold converse by theurgy, and by white magic, with the unseen world. As Plotinus returns with Ficinus to the regions of day, so Iamblichus revives with Paracelsus and Cornelius

Agrippa. The ancient and the modern cabbalists established their theurgy on a common basis. Plotinus and Campanella both agree on this point, that the world is, as it were, one living organism, all the parts of which are related by certain sympathies and antipathies, so that the adept in these secret affinities acquires a mastery over the elements. It was by this principle, according to Agrippa, that art made nature her slave. As Proclus required of the theurgist an ascetic purity, so Campanella makes it an essential that the cultivator of occult science be a good Christian—one possessing no mere historic, but an 'intrinsic' faith, a man qualified alike to hold commerce with holy spirits, and to baffle the arts of the malign.

The spirits called by Iamblichus lords of the sublunary elements are equivalent to the astral spirits of Christian theurgy; and those powers which are said by him to preside over matter and impart material gifts, answer to the elementary spirits of the Rosicrucians. Iamblichus and Proclus were firm believers in the efficacy of certain unintelligible words of foreign origin, which were on no account to be Hellenized, lest they should lose their virtue. Cornelius Agrippa enjoins the use of similar magical terms, which he declares more potent than names which have a meaning, and of irresistible power, when reverently uttered, because of the latent divine energy they contain. The 'Shemhamphorasch' of Jewish tradition, and the 'Agla' of the cabbalists, are examples. The great point of distinction between the theurgy of the earlier and of the later period is sufficiently obvious. In the fourth and fifth centuries theurgy came in to eke out an unsatisfactory philosophy, and to prop a falling religion. In the sixteenth century a similar intrusion into the unseen world was the offspring of a newly recovered freedom. It received its direction and encouragement, in part from the revived remains of ancient tradition, but it was pursued with a patience, an originality, and a boldness, which showed that the impulse was spontaneous, not derived. These magical essays were the gambols of the intellect let loose from its long scholastic durance.

In modern Germany, the philosophy of Schelling rests in substance on the foundation of Plotinus—the identity of subject and object. It is generally admitted, that his intellectual intuition is a refined modification of the Neo-Platonist ecstasy. But it is in some members of the so-called romantic school that the fallacious principle of the Alexandrians is most conspicuous. Frederick Schlegel did his best to make it appear that the great want of Christian literature was a mythology like that of the Greeks. His philosophy seeks to throw over all life and history the haze of a poetic symbolism. He was symbol-mad; and, very naturally, became a Roman-catholic deist, to indulge his taste that way to the utmost. He wrote bitter diatribes against the Reformation. He depreciated Luther as the mere translator of the Bible. He extolled Jacob Behmen as the gifted seer who revealed to mortal gaze its inmost mysteries. He evolved as much Christianity as he cared to conserve from the fancies of the Indian Brahmins. Such a fantastic religio-philosophy as this is the result for which experience bids us look wherever men attempt thus to combine a poetical theosophy with popular superstition. Frederick Schlegel was never an authority, and the little influence he once exerted is rapidly passing away. This destructive conservatism—this superstitious scepticism—this subtilized materialism, is a contradiction too monstrous to be kept alive by any amount of mere cleverness.

The dialogue Mr. Kingsley has imagined between Orestes and Hypatia is prophetic. If ever the sceptical intuitionalism of our times should have the opportunity of trying, on any considerable scale, the efficacy of its principles, that prophecy would be fulfilled. It would then appear that the masters in this school are capable of pandering to the passions of the multitude as Orestes did. Their theories would be as impotent to influence the general mind as the speculations of Hypatia concerning the myths of Greece. The same proud selfishness would display itself. The mass of mankind, 'without intuitions,'—the multitude who never hear the mystic voice of the 'over-soul,' or open the avenues of their nature to the

influxes of the All, would be left of necessity to themselves. Their existence is but transitory—their vices the shadows of the great picture of the universe—a necessary foil whereby to exhibit the super-Christian virtues of the philosophic few. They will soon be resolved into the aggregate of souls which make up the heart and motive power of all matter—so, why should they not live as heretofore? This people, that knoweth not our transcendental law, are accursed. This spiritualist pantheism would not indeed restore, under its old names, the Olympus of Greece, as the Alexandrians strove to do. But it would come to the same thing upon their leaguing, as they would be forced to do, with some form or other of that baptized paganism we call popery. These religions for the few, however, with their arrogant refinement and idle subtlety, have played the part of priest and Levite too often. That faith which has proved the Good Samaritan and true neighbour to suffering humanity can alone finally secure its homage and its love.

LIFE OF SYDNEY SMITH.*

THE curious reader will assuredly have no objection to transport himself for a moment, chronologically to about the year eighty of the last century, and geographically to Woodford, in Essex, there to inspect a small section of the innumerable Smith family. Behold the father, tall and stalwart in aspect, dressed in drab, as though he were an amateur quaker, and surmounted by a hat of the strangest proportions, like that which a retired coalheaver might be supposed to adopt from old association. The mother is fair to look on, with a charm of mind and manner yet more potent than the beauty of that frame, too delicate for long life among household cares. He is of quick, restless temperament, self-reliant, with a dash of whimsicality in his habit; never long in one place; fond of building and unbuilding; buying and selling some score of places in different parts of England. She has French blood in her veins, and the French vivacity sparkles through her native sweetness. So the children, four boys and a girl, have a goodly heritage of qualities,—strength from one side the Channel, brilliance from the other. All were remarkable for early tokens of talent. To the boys, books and disputation were as tarts and marbles. They read with insatiable greediness, and would try their skill against each other by fierce arguments on questions beyond their years. No other boys can stand a moment against these practised word-gladia-

* *A Memoir of the Rev. Sydney Smith.* By his Daughter, LADY HOLLAND. With a Selection from his Letters. Edited by MRS. AUSTIN. 2 vols. Longman. 1855.

tors. They grow intolerably overbearing—the young Sophistae. Away with them from home, ere they be spoilt! A public school shall be their Socrates—shall exercise and temper those quick wits of theirs—show them their limit and their level.

Sydney Smith, the second of these lads, is the subject, and his daughter, Lady Holland, the author of the memoir now before us.

Every one who knew Sydney Smith was aware that but a part of his nature—and that not the most truly noble—was known to the public. None was so deeply convinced of this as she who knew him best, and it was the beloved and melancholy task of his widow to prepare the memoranda and collect the letters which should form material for a worthy biography. But who should undertake it? Those who best understood him were too old, or too much occupied, or gone. Some said there would be little to tell for which the public would care; others, that the time was not yet come for the telling. But Mrs. Smith had consecrated her remaining days to the memory of her husband, and urged on Mrs. Austin her anxious request that she would undertake the memoir and correspondence. Failing health compelled that lady to decline any labour beyond that of editing a selection from the letters. She stipulated, very properly, for full liberty to suppress anything that might injure the dead or wound the feelings of the living. An excellent discretion has guided her hand throughout the execution of her work. A righteous disappointment awaits those prurient eyes that may scan this correspondence in search of pungent personalities and the piquancy of scandal. The slightest note admitted into the volume has at least its touch to contribute towards the desired portraiture. Nothing is excessive or wearisome, while enough is given faithfully to represent the writer in heart and act.

Lady Holland's memoir, too, is right pleasant reading. We cannot regret that even friends like Moore and Jeffrey were unable to undertake what a daughter has so admirably accomplished. This biography is characterized by good sense and good taste. The narrative is clearly and gracefully written, the anecdotes and good

stories well told, with a terse idiomatic raciness at times, that happily marks the lineage of the authoress. Above all—and this must be the source of truest satisfaction to the writer—the work justifies before the world the cherished convictions of domestic affection,—makes it manifest that there were in the subject of it admirable qualities of mind and heart of higher worth by far than any attribute which the common judgment had assigned to the dazzling talker and the trenchant controversialist.

Mrs. Austin justly remarks, that the reputation of Sydney Smith has risen since his death. It has risen, and it is to rise. Every year lessens the number of those who can remember the marvellous charm of his conversation—that diaphragm-shaking, fancy-chasing, oddity-piling, incongruity-linking, hyperbole-topping, wonder-working faculty of his, which a bookful of Homeric compound adjectives would still leave undescribed. But meanwhile, the true proportions of that large intellect have been growing upon the vision of men. Blinded with tears of laughter, they could not estimate his magnitude. Hands palsied by convulsive cachinnations were too unsteady to hold the measure and fit the colossus with a judgment. Now it is better understood how all that wit was only the efflorescence of his greatness,—the waving wild flowers on the surface of a pyramid. Time may take from the edifice of his fame some of its lighter decorations, obliterate quaint carvings, decapitate some grotesque and pendant gargoyles, destroy some rich flamboyant word traceries; but that very spoliation will only display more completely the solid foundation, the broad harmonious plan of his life's structure, and exhibit the fine conscientiousness with which those parts of the building most remote from the public eye were finished, even as those most seen.

> In the elder days of art,
> Builders wrought with greatest care
> Each minute and unseen part;
> For the gods are everywhere.

It is the work of time either to detect or to vindicate the archi-

tecture of every conspicuous name. The decay which exposes pretence justifies truthfulness, and gives the very life it seems to steal.

But, while the truth and the power that lay in such a man might be thus secure of recognition, it remained for a memoir like the present to exhibit the love with which his nature overflowed—his strong affections—the thoughtful tenderness of his sympathy—his generous spirit of self-sacrifice—his passion for making all about him happy, from the least unto the greatest. It is a right thing and a delightful that we should be assured, by those who alone can render such testimony, that the wit and mirthfulness of the noted Sydney Smith were not mere drawing-room and dinner-table coruscations, stimulated by reputation, by company, by wine, but the daily sunshine of a home. For many years his life was a struggle with the incumbrance of inevitable debt, remote from society, in disappointment, in a kind of exile. How many, so circumstanced, would have made themselves and all about them wretched,—visiting their vexations, in fretfulness or gloom, on wife, and children, and servants! He was indomitable in good temper, indefatigable in prompt clear-headed action; sharing and lightening every one's burden by some blithe pleasantry or other; and esteeming no handicraft job a trouble, no contrivance a trifle, which could increase the comfort of any child, domestic, or even animal beneath his care. We have seen, as from a distance, the scintillations of his wit, like the sparks that find their way up into the night from the mouth of some lowly cottage chimney. How goodly is it to enter the door,—to look upon the great genial fire of household love from which they all were born—to watch the beaming faces round the ingle—to hear the ringing laugh of childhood, the merriment, the music, the singing. Whether at home or abroad, the wit of this man was the playful overflow of the strength given to a great lover of his kind. Bright it was, but no mere brilliance, no *feu de joie;*—it was shiningly benign, as the rocket gleaming through the sky, whose fire-path is followed by the rope that saves a shipwrecked crew.

At Winchester School, under much misery and semi-starvation, young Sydney produced thousands of Latin verses; ripening through this wretchedness for a fellowship at New College, Oxford. His inclinations would have led him to the bar; but it had been a costly matter to provide a legal education for his clever elder brother, Robert. So Sydney, after narrowly escaping being sent as supercargo to China, is urged by his father to enter the Church. At last he complies; and is next to be discovered, on diligent inquiry, a curate, in the midst of Salisbury Plain—a pauper pastor, horseless, bookless—nay, too often meatless, saying solitary grace over potatoes sprinkled with ketchup. Unhappy!—not for this poverty, but for the pressure which drove him to a calling for which he had no spontaneous vocation. At all events, filthy lucre did not entice him within the pale ecclesiastic. Once entered there, his duty was discharged most conscientiously, according to his views of it.

It appears to us as much a matter of course as the stopping of the heroine's runaway horse by the hero in a novel, that the squire of the parish, having ears on his head and some brains in it, should have taken a great fancy to Mr. Smith, the curate. He sends him to the Continent as tutor to his son; but war breaking out, they put into Edinburgh, 'in stress of politics.' In that 'energetic and unfragrant city,' he took two eventful steps—matrimony, the first; the second, the projection and production of the *Edinburgh Review*, of which he edited the first number.

In estimating the share of Sydney Smith in a movement of such importance, it is necessary to ascertain the secret of the power possessed by that portentous creation of buff and blue which was born, ideally at least, in the ninth flat of Buccleugh-place, Edinburgh.* It was not that the writers in this periodical evinced a talent which distanced what a literature rich as that of England had hitherto produced. The real strength of the new-comer lay in the

* See a full discussion of this question in No. XXXI. of the *British Quarterly Review*.

genius and the daring of those successive assaults upon political and social abuses under which we groaned, from our Dan unto our Beersheba. There were the Catholics unemancipated—blood-thirsty game-laws—Test and Corporation Acts—prisoners could have no counsel—the laws of debt and conspiracy were scandalously oppressive—terrorism and taxation made up the business of the State, and digestion seemed the chief end of the Church. All the most thorough and most telling protests against abuses such as these, which made luminous the early course of the *Review*, proceeded from the pen of Sydney Smith. It is to his commanding genius that we must award the honour of winning a hearing for the *Edinburgh* from listless, despondent, or prejudiced auditors, on those great questions with which its deserved success must be for ever associated.

Jeffrey worked harder for the *Review* than any one else. Most praiseworthy is the steadiness with which the versatile mind, cooped up in that wiry little body, laboured at the periodical oar; and, had the *Edinburgh* existed for Scotland only, it would have needed for success nothing but what Jeffrey could have furnished. His analytical, dissecting-knife style of mind, his metaphysical acuteness, his proneness to philosophize about men as mere abstractions, his love of disquisition—all these were articles in demand north of the Tweed. The clever owner of such qualities might be pardoned, on their account, his flippancy, his critical destructiveness, his weary steppes, here and there, of unrelieved prosiness. As to wit, no one asked for it. Sydney Smith used to say that it required a surgical operation to get a joke well into a Scotch understanding. But in England humour is native and of high account. We do not think a man the less in earnest for his jest by the way, for an extravaganza now and then. With all our practicality, we love a playful fancy, quaint indirectnesses, grotesque collocations, sudden turns, gravely comic ironies. We do not always speak upon the square; we are not ashamed of having been known to utter an impracticable wish. Caledonia has given us some humorists of note, but they

have always been formed by the culture and the society of England. Jeffrey, as Smith jocularly told him, was brimful at any time of arguments on every imaginable question; but Sydney alone could render the arguments he urged irresistible from laughter as well as logic. It is not too much to say that to his mind, more than to any other, was the *Edinburgh* indebted for the vigorous hold it took upon the public feeling of that time. His own modest estimate of his share in the work is thus expressed in one of his letters to Jeffrey:—

'You must consider that Edinburgh is a very grave place, and that you live with philosophers who are very intolerant of nonsense. I write for the London, not for the Scotch market, and perhaps more people read my nonsense than your sense. The complaint was loud and universal of the extreme dulness and lengthiness of the *Edinburgh Review*. Too much, I admit, would not do of my style; but the proportion in which it exists enlivens the *Review*, if you appeal to the whole public, and not to the eight or ten grave Scotchmen with whom you live. I am a very ignorant, frivolous, half-inch person; but, such as I am, I am sure I have done your *Review* good, and contributed to bring it into notice. Such as I am, I shall be, and cannot promise to alter. Such is my opinion of the effect of my articles. Almost any one of the sensible men who write for the *Review* would have written a much wiser and more profound article than I have done upon the game-laws. I am quite certain nobody would obtain more readers for his essay upon such a subject; and I am equally certain that the principles are *right*, and that there is no lack of sense in it.'—Vol. ii. p. 181.

After a residence of five years in Edinburgh, Sydney Smith removed to London, straitened in means, too liberal in his views to hope for much beyond merest journeyman's wages from his Church, but consoled by the *entrée* of Holland House, by an increasing circle of friends, and by signal popularity as a preacher. Languid West-Endians crowded to hear a man who preached in the every-day speech of good society, who was earnest, practical,

intelligible, even interesting, in the pulpit, and under whom they almost forgot to yawn. The lectures on Moral Philosophy, delivered at the Royal Institution, added deservedly to his fame and funds, and blocked up with equipages the streets which are named after Albemarle and Grafton.

In 1809 preferment came, through Lord and Lady Holland, in the shape of a small living at Foston le Clay, in Yorkshire. A change in the law made residence and building compulsory, and Sydney Smith must atone in his own person for the ecclesiastical negligence and abuse of a hundred and fifty years.

Had he been the feather-brained, popularity-hunting fashionable which John Foster chose wrathfully to fancy him, he must have perished for lack of ices, champagne, and small-talk. He must have lost at least one pair of boots and all his peace of mind in the stiff clay of Foston. Nor would he have been the first London parson who has all but died of a living in Yorkshire. 'Muster Smith,' said the octogenarian clerk of Foston, on his first appearance, 'it often stroikes my moind, that people as comes from London is such *fools*.' Clerk and people straightway discover that their new pastor is no fool. He adapts himself to the situation with a facility that would have been amazing in any one except himself and Alcibiades. At London or at Foston, at Susa or at Sparta, your true lord of circumstance is equally at home. In the twinkling of an eye Sydney Smith has grown bucolic. His ignorance of agriculture is vanishing every day. He dines with the farmers, he sets on foot gardens for the poor, he doctors peasants or cattle, as the case may be (for he heard medical lectures at Edinburgh), he takes an absorbing interest in the diet and gestation of sheep and kine, and can find amusement in the trifles which constitute the events of a hamlet, so sparsely peopled, 'that you never for years see so many as four people all together except on a very fine Sunday at church.'

Nine months of cheerful untiring energy sufficed to build the new parsonage-house which was to replace the crumbling hovel formerly so called. He says:—

'It made me a very poor man for many years, but I never repented it. I turned schoolmaster, to educate my son, as I could not afford to send him to school. Mrs. Sydney turned schoolmistress, to educate my girls, as I could not afford a governess. I turned farmer, as I could not let my land. A man-servant was too expensive; so I caught up a little garden girl, made like a milestone, christened her Bunch, put a napkin in her hand, and made her my butler. The girls taught her to read, Mrs. Sydney to wait, and I undertook her morals; Bunch became the best butler in the county.

'I had little furniture, so I bought a cart-load of deals; took a carpenter (who came to me for parish relief, called Jack Robinson), with a face like a full moon, into my service; established him in a barn, and said, 'Jack, furnish my house.' You see the result!'—Vol. i. p. 159.

Apropos of 'Bunch,' Mrs. Marcet records an amusing scene which she witnessed on a visit to Foston.

'I was coming downstairs the next morning, when Mr. Smith suddenly said to Bunch, who was passing, 'Bunch, do you like roast duck or boiled chicken?' Bunch had probably never tasted either the one or the other in her life, but answered, without a moment's hesitation, 'Roast duck, please sir,' and disappeared. I laughed. 'You may laugh,' said he, 'but you have no idea of the labour it has cost me to give her that decision of character. The Yorkshire peasantry are the quickest and shrewdest in the world, but you can never get a direct answer from them; if you ask them even their own names, they always scratch their heads, and say, 'A's sur ai don't knaw, sir;' but I have brought Bunch to such perfection, that she never hesitates now on any subject, however difficult. I am very strict with her. Would you like to hear her repeat her crimes? She has them by heart, and repeats them every day. 'Come here, Bunch!' (calling out to her), 'come and repeat your crimes to Mrs. Marcet;' and Bunch, a clean, fair, squat, tidy little girl, about ten or twelve years of age, quite as a matter of course,

as grave as a judge, without the least hesitation, and with a loud voice, began to repeat—'Plate-snatching, gravy-spilling, door-slamming, blue-bottle fly-catching, and curtsey-bobbing.' 'Explain to Mrs. Marcet what blue-bottle fly-catching is.' 'Standing with my mouth open and not attending, sir.' 'And what is curtsey-bobbing?' 'Curtseying to the centre of the earth, please sir.' 'Good girl! now you may go.' She makes a capital waiter, I assure you. On *state* occasions, Jack Robinson, my carpenter, takes off his apron and waits too, and does pretty well; but he sometimes naturally makes a mistake, and sticks a gimlet into the bread instead of a fork.'—Vol. i. p. 186.

Here is another illustration of the man from the same pen:—

"'But I came up to speak to Annie Kay. Where is Annie Kay? Ring the bell for Annie Kay.' Kay appeared. 'Bring me my medicine-book, Annie Kay. Kay is my apothecary's boy, and makes up my medicines.' Kay appears with the book. 'I am a great doctor; would you like to hear some of my medicines?' 'Oh yes, Mr. Sydney.' 'There is the gentle-jog, a pleasure to take it; the bull-dog, for more serious cases; Peter's puke; heart's delight, the comfort of all the old women in the village; rub-a-dub, a capital embrocation; dead-stop, settles the matter at once; up-with-it-then, needs no explanation; and so on. Now, Annie Kay, give Mrs. Spratt a bottle of rub-a-dub; and to Mr. Coles, a dose of dead-stop and twenty drops of laudanum. This is the house to be ill in (turning to us); indeed, everybody who comes is expected to take a little something; I consider it a delicate compliment when my guests have a slight illness here. We have contrivances for everything. Have you seen my patent armour? No? Annie Kay, bring my patent armour. Now, look here: if you have a stiff neck or swelled face, here is this sweet case of tin filled with hot water, and covered with flannel, to put round your neck, and you are well directly. Likewise, a patent tin shoulder, in case of rheumatism. There you see a stomach-tin, the greatest comfort in life; and lastly, here is a tin slipper, to be filled with hot water, which

you can sit with in the drawing-room, should you come in chilled, without wetting your feet. Come and see my apothecary's shop.' We all went downstairs, and entered a room filled entirely on one side with medicines, and on the other with every description of groceries and household or agricultural necessaries; in the centre, a large chest, forming a table, and divided into compartments for soap, candles, salt, and sugar.

"'Here you see,' said he, 'every human want before you:—

> 'Man wants but little here below,
> As beef, veal, mutton, pork, lamb, venison show,'

spreading out his arms to exhibit everything, and laughing. 'Life is a difficult thing in the country, I assure you, and it requires a good deal of forethought to steer the ship, when you live twelve miles from a lemon. By-the-by, that reminds me of one of our greatest domestic triumphs. Some years ago, my friend C——, the arch-epicure of the Northern Circuit, was dining with me in the country. On sitting down to dinner, he turned round to the servant, and desired him to look in his great-coat pocket, and he would find a lemon; 'for,' he said, 'I thought it likely you might have duck and green peas for dinner, and therefore thought it prudent, at this distance from a town, to provide a lemon.' I turned round, and exclaimed indignantly, 'Bunch, bring in the lemon-bag!' and Bunch appeared with a bag containing a dozen lemons. He respected us wonderfully after that. Oh, it is reported that he goes to bed with concentrated lozenges of wild-duck, so as to have the taste constantly in his mouth when he wakes in the night.'"—Vol. i. p. 355.

Nor was this gaiety in any measure the result of mere heedlessness or insensibility. His strong affections gave poignancy to all that was trying in his lot. But the sense of duty, the spirit of love, the manly resolve to make the best of whatever might befal, bore him bravely up till better days.

'I have not unfrequently seen him in an evening,' says Lady

Holland, 'when bill after bill poured in, as he was sitting at his desk (carefully examining them, and gradually paying them off) quite overcome by the feeling of the debt hanging over him, cover his face in his hands, and exclaim, 'Ah! I see I shall end my old age in a gaol!' This was the more striking from one the buoyancy of whose spirits usually rose above all difficulties. It made a deep impression upon us; and I remember many little family councils, to see if it were not possible to economize in something more, and lessen our daily expenses to assist him.'

Meanwhile he was a diligent contributor to the *Edinburgh*. He was never without some subject in hand for investigation. He was a very rapid reader, nimbly 'tearing out the bowels of a book,' seizing and estimating general results. His memory was not remarkably retentive. In gaining the fullest and most accurate information, written or oral, on any topic he was about to handle, he was most scrupulous and indefatigable. The necessary data once collected and arranged, he wrote swiftly, with all his heart and soul; never pausing for polish or effect, rarely altering or correcting what he had written. His power of abstraction was great. With admirable agility he could transfer, in a moment, his whole mind from one subject to another. From the dry drudgery of bills and business papers he could turn instantly to the composition of an essay or a sermon, and write with rapid ease, unhindered by surrounding conversation or music, unvexed by interruptions. A certain mental restlessness rendered that necessary interchange of business and study, which would have fretted most literary men, a positive advantage to him. Ever eager to see and hear, he liked first impressions; he would never dwell more than ten minutes together on the same scene or picture. When no interruption came from without, he would make one; and presently return to his desk, enlivened by a turn in the garden, by play with a child, or attention to some domestic concern. In fact, his capacity for business and for letters was alike extraordinary. He could plod and plan, scrutinize and calculate, as though he had never in his life conceived a fancy, said

a good thing, or written a wise one. When made, at last, canon residentiary of St. Paul's, how did he electrify the officers of the Chapter! He was the impersonation of Administrative Reform. Here was a man who would not run in the routine groove—who would take nothing for granted—who would sleepily confide in no person merely because it had been usual to trust him with everything—who insisted on examining everything and everybody for himself—who taxed the bills (the wretch!)—who somehow had come to know as well as the builders (the monster!) all about putty, white lead, and Portland stone. Would that we had more such men to manage all our affairs, secular and religious, men brave and true enough to sacrifice peace at first for purity and safety afterwards. 'I find traces of him,' says his old friend the Dean of St. Paul's, 'in every particular of Chapter affairs; and on every occasion where his hand appears, I find stronger reason for respecting his sound judgment, knowledge of business, and activity of mind; above all, the perfect fidelity of his stewardship.'

But we anticipate his history. In 1828 Lord Lyndhurst courageously offered him a stall vacant at Bristol. Thither he repaired, not to a larger, but a more secure source of income; and on the 5th of November preached a sermon before the mayor and corporation so intolerably tolerant, that they 'could scarcely keep the turtle on their stomachs.' The kindness of Lord Lyndhurst enabled him to exchange Foston for the beautifully-situated living of Combe Florey, near Taunton.

And now, in the ebb and flow of politics, the Whigs come into power. Lord Melbourne expressed his regret in after years that he had not made Sydney Smith a bishop. Considering, not the ideal, but the actual, Church of England, never had man better claim. He had fought on the Liberal side, when every blow he struck demolished a hope of preferment. He had stood alone in his profession, aiding with his pen the Whig cause, as not another man in England could, when Whiggism was outcast and empty-handed. A bishopric, he was well aware, would not have increased his

happiness—it would have been refused if offered; but, whether such return came or not, his heart was no less true to the cause he had embraced. It was not for place that he had wrought and endured so much. But at all events Lord Grey will appoint him to a prebendal stall at St. Paul's; some years after, his brother leaves him his property; and behold him in easy circumstances for the rest of his days. In his first letter to Archdeacon Singleton, he is provoked to sum up his receipts from the Establishment as follows:—

'You tell me I shall be laughed at as a rich and overgrown churchman; be it so. I have been laughed at a hundred times in my life, and care little or nothing about it. If I am well provided for now, I have had my full share of the blanks in the lottery as well as the prizes. Till thirty years of age I never received a farthing from the Church; then 50*l.* per annum for two years; then nothing for ten years; then 500*l.* per annum, increased for two or three years to 800*l.*, till, in my grand climacteric, I was made Canon of St. Paul's: and before that period, I had built a parsonage-house with farm offices for a large farm, which cost me 4000*l.*, and had reclaimed another from ruins at the expense of 2000*l.* A lawyer, or a physician in good practice, would smile at this picture of great ecclesiastical wealth; and yet I am considered as a perfect monster of ecclesiastical prosperity.'

Let sanguine mediocrity, seeking refuge in the Church of England from Dissent, consider this career. Grievous are the blanks indeed, and sure, to unpatronized independence of thought. It is said that under popular church government, the minister of religion dares not speak according to his convictions. What heroism was requisite in Sydney Smith to avow his! O Neophyte! about to enter holy orders for respectability's sake and the morsel of bread, learn thy first lesson from the sagacious Canon of St. Paul's. He tells you, 'What bishops like to see in the inferior clergy is a drooping-down-deadness of manner.' Go! buy thee a full-length mirror, and practise it all day long!

Now, reader, we ring the bell and order you refreshments; here are some fragments of Smith's conversation:—

'It is a great proof of shyness to crumble bread at dinner. 'Oh! I see you are afraid of me,' (turning to a young lady who sat by him,) 'you crumble your bread. I do it when I sit by the Bishop of London, and with both hands when I sit by the Archbishop.'

'Don't you know, as the French say, there are three sexes—men, women, and clergymen.'

'Yes! you find people ready enough to do the Samaritan, without the oil and twopence.'

'There is a New Zealand attorney arrived in London, with 6s. 8d. tattooed all over his face.'

'An argument arose, in which my father observed how many of the most eminent men of the world had been diminutive in person, and after naming several among the ancients, he added, 'Why, look there, at Jeffrey; and there is my little friend ——, who has not body enough to cover his mind decently with; his intellect is improperly exposed.''

'When so showy a woman as Mrs. —— appears at a place, though there is no garrison within twelve miles, the horizon is immediately clouded with majors.'

'At Mr. Romilly's there arose a discussion on the *Inferno* of Dante, and the tortures he had invented. 'He may be a great poet,' said my father, 'but as to invention, I consider him a mere bungler—no imagination, no knowledge of the human heart. If I had taken it in hand, I would show you what torture really was. For instance,' (turning merrily to his old friend, Mrs. Marcet,) 'you should be doomed to listen for a thousand years to conversations between Caroline and Emily, where Caroline should always give wrong explanations in chemistry, and Emily in the end be unable to distinguish an acid from an alkali. You, Macaulay, let me consider?—oh, you should be dumb. False dates and facts of the reign of Queen Anne should for ever be shouted in your ears; all liberal and honest opinions should be ridiculed in your presence;

and you should not be able to say a single word during that period in their defence.' 'And what would you condemn me to, Mr. Sydney?' said a young mother. 'Why, you should for ever see those three sweet little girls of yours on the point of falling down stairs, and never be able to save them. There, what tortures are there in Dante equal to these?' '

'Daniel Webster struck me much like a steam-engine in trousers.'

'When I began to thump the cushion of my pulpit, on first coming to Foston, as is my wont when I preach, the accumulated dust of a hundred and fifty years made such a cloud, that for some minutes I lost sight of my congregation.'

'Nothing amuses me more than to observe the utter want of perception of a joke in some minds. Mrs. Jackson called the other day, and spoke of the oppressive heat of last week. 'Heat, ma'am!' I said, 'it was so dreadful here, that I found there was nothing left for it but to take off my flesh and sit in my bones.' 'Take off your flesh and sit in your bones, sir! Oh, Mr. Smith! how could you do that?' she exclaimed, with the utmost gravity. 'Nothing more easy, ma'am; come and see next time.' But she ordered her carriage, and evidently thought it a very unorthodox proceeding.'—Vol. i. p. 266.

Lady Holland has summoned to the witness-box some of those best qualified to testify, who with one voice aver, not only that grave truth was often couched in Sydney's wildest witticisms, so that taste and principle always redeemed them from buffoonery, but that many who best knew him admired his wisdom even more than his wit. 'His reputation,' says an accomplished lady, 'has been much founded on his powers of entertaining, which are very great, indeed unrivalled; yet I prefer his serious conversation.' Mrs. Austin went to hear him, 'with some misgivings,' she says, 'as to the effect which the well-known face and voice, ever associated with wit and mirth, might have upon me, even in the sacred place. Never were misgivings more quickly and entirely dissipated. The moment he appeared in the pulpit, all the weight of his duty, all

the authority of his office, were written on his countenance; and without a particle of affectation (of which he was incapable), his whole demeanour bespoke the gravity of his purpose.' More than once had he the satisfaction of receiving letters of gratitude, assuring him that his preaching had not been in vain, and had stopped the writer in a course of guilt and dissipation. 'The expression of my father's face,' says Lady Holland, 'when at rest, was that of sense and dignity; and this was the picture of his mind in the calmer and graver hours of life; but when he found (as we sometimes do) a passage that bore the stamp of *immortality*, his countenance in an instant changed, and lighted up, and a sublime thought, sight, or action, struck on his soul at once, and found a kindred spark within it.' In the family circle he would give expression at times to thoughtful religious feeling; but, with a taste so sensitive, and a dislike of conventional religious phrases so strong as his, we should be strangely wanting in charity were we to suppose that solemn thoughts were not more frequent with him than solemn words.

What sunny wisdom pervades remarks and maxims such as these:—

'When you meet with neglect, let it rouse you to exertion instead of mortifying your pride. Set about lessening those defects which expose you to neglect; and improve those excellences which command attention and respect.'

'Don't be too severe upon yourself and your own failings; keep on, don't faint, be energetic to the last.'

'Take short views, hope for the best, and trust in God.'

'Let every man be *occupied*, and occupied in the highest employment of which his nature is capable, and die with the consciousness that *he has done his best!*'

'Some very excellent people tell you they dare not hope; why do they not dare to hope? To me it seems much more impious to dare to despair.'

'The real way to improve is not so much by varied reading, as by finding out your weak points on any subject and mastering them.'

'True, it is most painful not to meet the kindness and affection you feel you have deserved, and have a right to expect from others; but it is a mistake to complain of it; for it is of no use: you cannot extort friendship with a cocked pistol.'

'I destroy, on principle, all letters to me, but I have no secrets myself. I should not care if almost every word I have written were published at Charing Cross. I live with open windows.'

'Never give way to melancholy; resist it steadily, for the habit will encroach. I once gave a lady two-and-twenty recipes against melancholy: one was a bright fire; another to remember all the pleasant things said to and of her; another to keep a box of sugar-plums on the chimney-piece, and a kettle simmering on the hob. I thought this mere trifling at the moment, but have in after-life discovered how true it is that these little pleasures often banish melancholy better than higher and more exalted objects; and that no means ought to be thought too trifling which can oppose it either in ourselves or others.'

'Oh! I am happy to see all who will visit me; I have lived twenty years in the country, and have never met a bore.'

The wit of Sydney Smith was always under the control of good taste and good feeling. It was never mischievous to him by any unseemliness, impertinence, or vulgarity. Throughout his writings, so remarkable for natural flow and freedom of style, so simple and so idiomatic, you search in vain for anything slipshod, for triteness or chit-chat, for a single colloquial solecism. His style, like golden-haired Pyrrha, is always *simplex munditiis*. The brilliance of his conversation owed none of its fire to the glass. A thimbleful of wine destroyed his understanding, he said, and made him forget the number of the Muses. He sings the praises of water in a style that will make the floods in all teetotal stomachs to clap their hands. Far other the sparkling faculty of another wit, hectic from the ruddy wine, effervescent with champagne—poor Theodore Hook—the victim of the convivial cruelties of the great, mercilessly dined to death. Some of the happiest jests of Smith were ecclesiastical.

But such sallies were too professional to be profane. They seemed to rebound upon himself, or they played about his order; they certainly scorched nothing. If there was satire in them, it was directed only at hypocrisy or corruption. If he could lightly touch the terrene and external part of religion—its secularized institutions —its drowsy dignitaries; he paid lowliest obeisance (wherever he could discern it) to its heavenly spirit. He could play with the tassel of his cushion; never with the leaves of his Bible. Assuredly, of no other wit could this be said, that many persons felt flattered rather than otherwise, when singled out by him as the objects of a conversational attack. How genial and frolicsome must that raillery have been,—irradiating, never scathing,—summer lightning, indeed, —always directed by a delicate kindliness to something unlinked with the feelings or the pride—something that could be offered up —at which the owner could laugh as heartily as any one in the room, feeling as if some article of his, like a watch or a handkerchief, was made the subject of a feat by a master of legerdemain; as though he had unawares contributed to the common delight, and turned on, with a sudden touch, the great wit-fountain—never that he was held up as a butt of scorn for the arrows of an irrepressible and universal laugh. When he was quitting London for Yorkshire, the absent and eccentric Lord Dudley said to him, 'You have been laughing at me constantly, Sydney, for the last seven years, and yet in all that time you never said a single thing to me that I wished unsaid.' He remarks, 'This, I confess, pleased me.' Doubtless:—rare heart and head! A wit—and yet more beloved than feared!

In attempting a summary of the characteristics belonging to such a nature, the first place is due to that piercing sagacity for which he was so remarkable,—that combination of moral qualities with intellectual acuteness which constitutes practical wisdom. His first object is to clear away incumbrances,—to make 'a naked circle' about the matter in dispute, so that there may be a clear view of it from every side. He goes at once to the core, never mistaking adjuncts for essentials, never deceived by fine phrases, by conven-

tional solemnities or sentimentalities. 'We must get down at once,' he cries, 'to the solid rock, without heeding how we disturb the turf and the flowers above.' On the American rivers, the great logs floated down get jammed up here and there;—a man must be let down by a rope from the overhanging trees,—find, if he can, the timber which is a kind of keystone and stops the rest—detach it—be pulled up in a twinkling—and away dash the giant trunks, shooting headlong, helter-skelter, down the stream. This delicate and perilous office Sydney Smith discharged for the dead-locked questions of his day. His treatment of a half-smothered, obfuscated topic never fails to clear and freshen it for all who come after him;—it is refreshing as a shower on dusty leaves, which not only gives them moisture at the time, but, by washing clean the clogged stomata, fits the innumerable mouths on every spray for drinking in their future nourishment from the surrounding air. He drives a slippery antagonist to his last wriggle,—a pompous and windy one to his last gasp—by insisting on their saying what they mean. Whether in extracting the terror from a term meant for a bugbear, or the hue from a term designed as a cosmetic, his consummate logic is equally admirable. The rhetorician finds that his colour-box is gone; the polemic, with linstock lighted, that his powder has been damped. Sydney Smith has conquered by rendering useless, weapons which had been redoubtable till he appeared. He need not himself launch a single envenomed personality, or point one deep-throated railing accusation. Those familiar with his writings will remember instances of such high service in the searching examination he institutes into the use and misuse of words like 'pedantic,' 'simplicity,' 'speculative,' 'conscience,' and many more.

Of course, to such a man, all mere party cries, specious generalities, clerical flunkeyism, official cant, and owl-faced commonplaces, must be ever abominable. 'Upon religion and morals,' he writes, 'depends the happiness of mankind; but the fortune of knaves and the power of fools is sometimes made to rest on the

same apparent basis; and we will never (if we can help it) allow a rogue to get rich, or a blockhead to get powerful, under the sanction of these awful words.' He tells brother Abraham, with perfect truth, 'If I could see good measures pursued, I care not a farthing who is in power; but I have a passionate love for common justice and for common sense, and I abhor and despise every man who builds up his political fortunes upon their ruin.' To a clerical opponent, who accused him of want of piety, he replies:—

'Whether I have been appointed for my piety or not, must depend upon what this poor man means by piety. He means by that word, of course, a defence of all the tyrannical and oppressive abuses of the Church which have been swept away within the last fifteen or twenty years of my life: the Corporation and Test Acts; the Penal Laws against the Catholics; the Compulsory Marriages of Dissenters, and all those disabling and disqualifying laws which were the disgrace of our Church, and which he has always looked up to as the consummation of human wisdom. If piety consisted in the defence of these, —if it was impious to struggle for their abrogation, I have indeed led an ungodly life.'—*Third Letter to Archdeacon Singleton*, p. 252.

It must have been a shock indeed to every churchman who had made an adored poetical abstraction of the Church to see all the sanctimonious obscurity and lullaby laudation with which he had surrounded his idol, dissipated or ignored,—to be reminded that the discrepancy and contention which would be disgraceful and pernicious in worldly affairs, should, in common prudence, be avoided in the affairs of religion,—to hear plain facts simply stated by a man who could retain possession of his faculties in the presence of a bishop,—verily the Knight of La Mancha in the cave of Montesinos could not have been more amazed when his Dulcinea sent to borrow six reals on her new dimity petticoat. 'I have but one illusion left,' said Sydney, in his mellow age, 'and that is the Archbishop of Canterbury.' Alas! that too must be lost by this time to many of his readers, and a wicked world has ceased to put its trust even in archbishops!

The power of Sydney Smith as a light-diffuser and fallacy-detector on the grand scale was rendered the more formidable by a comprehensiveness not inferior to his discrimination—by his moderation and self-control. He never overstates his case. The argument once demolished, he does not vindictively pursue its unhappy parent. He does not take it for granted that every advocate of what is cruel or unjust must of necessity be a brute or a rogue. It is his habit to pause, even in full career, and make due allowance on every opportunity for the influence of education, of position, of routine. He never employs his perfect mastery of language—like the powders applied to dahlia-roots and hyacinths—to change the natural hue of the facts as they grow, and give to the resultant product an artificial colouring. Practical as he is, he is no cold-blooded utilitarian. Such men he ridicules as ligneous creatures, from whom, when bored with a gimlet, sawdust must come forth. His early days were unheated by the revolutionary fervour that kindled the contemporary youth of Coleridge, Southey, and Wordsworth; nor did his age, like theirs, forsake the liberal cause. His facts were as carefully examined and set forth—his arguments as guarded and as complete, as though his only hope had lain in diligence and logic. His witty illustration hides no weak places—it is the crest of his helmed argument—the mere pennon of his spear. The sword of this Taillefer does not deal blows less deadly because he rides out before the battle-front, tossing it in the air and catching it. So full of life is he, that when he has hewn his thoughts into serviceable shape for his purpose, they sprout forth presently into unlooked-for arborescent fancies,—are vivacious as the acacia wood, which, planed into a door-post, has been known to root again and shoot out budding boughs above the threshold. He can diverge as wondrously from the established treatment of a subject as doth the tower of Pisa from the perpendicular, yet never fall;—nay, as that tower may safely ring its peal of bells in an attitude menacing instant prostration, so can his strange faculty disport itself at will in posture the most hazardous, and peril no gravity save that

belonging to his readers. Such ease and self-possession belong only to great strength. Great as might be the ardour with which he would defend a good thing or assail a bad one, vehemence never made him forget that there were other good things and other bad beside the one in question. He did not imagine that the universe hung on the particular controversy with which he might be at any time occupied; he kept his material in its place; he had no hobby; he was guiltless of a panacea.

His judgment of mankind was healthy, neither Utopian nor cynical. Unlike the Sultan Mahmoud, who, smiting the Indian idol with his mace, saw gush forth therefrom an incredible quantity of pearls and precious stones, Sydney Smith found image-breaking anything but lucrative. But neglect and misrepresentation could not sour him. He was content to take men as we find them. If the highest motive moved them not, he thought it no shame to appeal to a lower. The skilful mariner must know not merely how a ship *might* be worked in a storm, but what the particular craft he has to manage can be brought to do—how she will 'behave,' as they say, in a certain crisis. This was the kind of knowledge by which he set most store in the management of men. He never enjoyed for its own sake the excitement of striving with his fellows. Some men, plunged into controversy, acquire fresh heat and life,—as fire-flies are said to regain their fading lustre on being immersed in hot water. Such a man was Priestley; such was not Sydney Smith. Some worthy cause must be at stake before he will vex his soul with contention. How strongly does his dignified forbearance and large-hearted love contrast with the savage Berserker fury of Swift, or the malign grin of Voltaire—to whom Ridicule and Sarcasm were Castor and Pollux, sole guiding stars across the frothy, melancholy sea of life.

Yet there was one phase of our common nature which presented to Sydney Smith a riddle he could not read. Into the heights and depths of our spiritual being he seems never to have searched. A religious enthusiast was to him as strange and incomprehensible a

creature as an ornithorynchus paradoxus. If he sees a man profoundly oppressed by the sense of guilt, he straightway imagines him a poor dyspeptic wretch, who thinks to please God by tears and groans. He is right when he says that God is love: but how strangely wanting in discernment when he fails to see that it is this very love which deepens to such poignancy the consciousness of ingratitude. Faith appears to be understood by him in the mere ecclesiastical rather than in the scriptural sense—as the opinion of the seen, more than the power of the unseen world. He is right when he insists on the necessity of practical preaching, of searching exhortation to the moralities of daily life, but grievously in error when he looks for genuine success apart from the motives set forth in the gospel, and the regenerating influence of the Spirit of God. What measure of such truth he himself may finally have come to hold we know not: far be it from us to judge him.

The complaint we urge is simply this;—not that he was not religious just in our fashion, but that he denied sincerity or common sense to great numbers who were not religious in his. His injustice to evangelical religion is notorious. In contact with that hated thing, his love of mercy and of justice vanishes—his nobler self is gone, and he is Sydney Smith no more. True, he would persecute neither Methodist nor Catholic; but his charity and candour are pushed to the utmost for the one, his scorn and abhorrence are concentrated on the other. He is eager to believe that every evangelical cobbler deems it glorious to lie for the tabernacle. He can scarcely be persuaded that a Papist will deem it glorious to lie for the Church. He is indignant at the power of illiterate preachers over the common people. He forgets how the order of Francis has preyed upon the mob, how the order of Dominic has hounded them on. The bad taste of Methodism disgusts him. A little reading among the works of some of those whom Rome delights to honour —the visions and meditations of some illustrious saints—the foul-mouthed utterances of the French preachers of the League, would have revealed to him sanctified puerilities, holy profanities, delirious

obscenities, blood-thirsty blasphemies, in comparison with which the maddest rant of an American camp-meeting is seemliness, sobriety, and sense.

As to the good taste of much that Smith saw fit to quote from the public organs and private journals of the evangelical party, we have not a word of apology to offer. With many passages citation is condemnation, and they convict themselves without a stroke from the satirist. But the sin of the assailant lay in resolving to believe, and to make others believe, that the religionists assailed were made up only of superstition and austerity—if sincere, all grimness—if hollow, all grimace—frantic with a heady proselytism, or greedy with a low-minded cunning.

To his attack on Indian missions every succeeding year brought in, and is to bring, fresh refutation. But for missionary effort Sutteeism would still have been allowed, Indian priestcraft petted, and the wheel of Juggernaut shoved onwards by the shoulder of the Honourable East India Company. He makes the difficulties encountered by missionaries his great argument against missions. Those difficulties had been largely created by the godless gainfulness which lived only to shake the pagoda-tree and gorge. Their existence only showed that brave and devoted hearts had not stirred them too soon. Quite otherwise did Sydney reason concerning the obstacles in the way of improvement among ourselves. The champion of reform in England abominates the reformers of India; and the chastiser of episcopalian Brahmins at home is the apologist of an idolatrous priesthood abroad. The reiterated publication of the article on Missions is far less excusable than its production at the first. It was not like Sydney Smith to persist against accumulating facts—to refuse to allow himself mistaken. If he had spoken a hasty word to any one in his employ, he could never be easy in his mind till, with manful kindliness, he had in some way acknowledged his fault, and healed the wound. But an evangelical dissenter was beyond the pale of courtesy or justice. Lady Holland tells us, 'Some one speaking of missions ridiculed them as inefficient. He

dissented, saying that, 'Though all was not done that was projected or even boasted of, yet that much good resulted; and that wherever Christianity was taught, it brought with it the additional good of civilization in its train, and men became better carpenters, better cultivators, better everything.'' There is his own good sense here; many reputed conversions are very questionable; many Indians have been made bad Hindoos without being made good Christians; much is still to do; but the collateral benefits of Christianity alone are an incalculable gain—underrated too often by religious impatience, eager for flattering reports. His views had evidently undergone modification; we are glad to give publicity to the change; we could wish that he himself had done so.

The position of Sydney Smith in the Church of England it is not difficult to understand. In his view, that institution meant 'a check to the conceited rashness of experimental reasoners—an adhesion to old moral landmarks—an attachment to the happiness we have gained from tried institutions greater than the expectation of that which is promised by novelty and change.' He was grieved to see it near 'dying of dignity,' but such he knew was the chronic disorder of all establishments. The practical energetic preaching, the activity, the education he advocated, were, alas! only to be found among the evangelicals he denounced. The Puseyite attempt at revival by priestcraft, sacraments, and wax-chandlery, was quite as little to his taste. He has much reverence for principles, little for dignities. For the life of him he cannot say of his bishop, as Cob of Bobadill, 'I do honour the very flea of his dog.' To every clergyman, duly sensible of the proprieties, the very sneeze of a bishop should be like the sternutation of the King of Monopotama, which is greeted by shouts in the ante-chamber, shouts in the palace-yard, shouts in the city-streets,—announced and reverberated by a thousand loyal voices; but bold recusant Sydney Smith can watch, *rectis oculis*—without awe, and without response—the convulsion of an episcopal proboscis! This provoking Spartan calls a spade a spade, and shockingly discourses of the Church as indeed

it is. They accuse him of desecrating holy things. He answers as England did to Ireland in one of our old wars. The Irish had laid up their corn in a church, hoping that the sanctity of the building would preserve their stores. The English replied that the sacrilege lay with the enemy, in converting the holy place to such a purpose; and removed the grain as coolly as if the sanctuary had been a barn.

Sydney Smith maintains that, as there is no adequate payment for the many in the Church, there must be prizes for the few. His letters to Archdeacon Singleton are unanswerable exposures of a fallacious and unjust attempt at reform, by which the strong ecclesiastics would have pilfered from the weak, without appeasing, after all, the popular dissatisfaction. Most of his ecclesiastical opponents conveniently identified the pious and the comfortable. To disturb an abuse was to assail religion. Has not Sancho the most religious objection to being drawn into discussion when guzzling among Camacho's flesh-pots? 'Good, your worship,' cries he, 'judge of your own chivalries, and meddle not with judging of other men's fears and valours; for perhaps I am as pretty a fearer of God as any of my neighbours: and pray let me whip off this scum; for all besides is idle talk, of which we must give an account in the next world.'

A most felicitous allusion exhibits in a sentence the effect of his plain-speaking. 'When an argument taken from real life and the actual condition of the world is brought among the shadowy discussions of ecclesiastics, it always occasions terror and dismay; it is like Æneas stepping into Charon's boat, which carried only ghosts and spirits. *Gemuit sub pondere cymba Sutilis.*' Sydney Smith will not cloak the matter; he acknowledges that the great majority who enter the Church do so having in view the good things which that Church may bestow. Yet every one so entering professes that he is moved thereto by the Holy Ghost. The bait must be there, he contends, or capital would not flow into the establishment. But what becomes of the vows upon the threshold? Hapless dilemma!—what, indeed!

He judged of the Romish priesthood very much by himself. He imagined them scarcely more likely to violate truth, humanity, or justice for their church, than would he for his. They had come down in the world, and he pitied them. They seemed to him the feeble shadow of a bygone terror. They resembled in his eyes the player in the *Spectator*, who complains so bitterly that, having once done the thunder, he is now reduced to act the ghost. They had suffered adversity, and he trusted they were the better for it. The service he rendered them was a righteous one and brave, however unworthy and incurable the subjects of the benefit. With scepticism, on the other side, he was never disposed to tamper for a moment. The irreligious spirit of the *Edinburgh* awakened his grave displeasure, and drew forth strong remonstrances to Jeffrey.

As a master of English, Sydney Smith may take his place upon the highest seat. A better model of style it would be difficult to propose,—partly from his intrinsic excellence,—partly because the absence of mannerism renders mere imitation impossible. Two comprehensive attributes may suffice to characterize his composition—Simplicity and Wit.

It is too common to confound simplicity with baldness, and to challenge its excellence accordingly. A simple style must be transparent, idiomatic, natural. Let these qualities be preserved, and a playful humour or a rich fancy will never detract from its simplicity. The soil need not be barren, but the flowers must be spontaneous. No brushes and powders, no wires, wax, or gauze, must litter the study table—materials for an artificial flora. No pedantic theory must play the martinet with the common rank and file of speech, or drum out the attention of the reader and the thoughts of the writer in a monotonous roll of periods.

Sydney Smith thought with clearness, and therefore expressed himself clearly. We cannot believe that any man fairly understands his own meaning who is unable to convey it to the tolerably educated mind about him. The banks and shoals of the sea are the ordinary resting-place of fogs. It is so with thought and language

—the cloud surely indicates the shallow. The literary criticisms of Smith betray his impatience of all artifice. He is aggrieved by the scholastic grandiosities of Parr; he exposes the pompous egotism of Rose; he rebukes, though gently, the apostrophes of Waterton. His allusions and illustrations are never too refined or recondite, requiring in the reader some unusual knowledge or peculiar point of mental view, and therefore meaningless to the many as a signal flag seen edgewise. His style acquires force as well as clearness from his Teniers-like finish and minuteness of detail—his constant preference of the concrete to the abstract. There is no question about his outline—no drapery conceals drawing careless or untrue—there are no figures half visible through mist. He is like the man of whom the Italian said, that he always spoke *in relief* (*parlava sempre scolpito*). Wherever he can make a generality special by adducing names, places, tangible objects, he always does so. If such features are not at hand, he invents them. Thus, speaking of the Bishop of Peterborough's questions, he says, 'By this new system of interrogation, a man may be admitted into orders at Barnet, rejected at Stevenage, re-admitted at Brogden, kicked out as a Calvinist at Witham Common, and hailed as an ardent Arminian on his arrival at York.' On the same principle we meet by the way with an enumeration like the following:—'Few men consider the historical view which will be taken of present events. The bubbles of last year: the fishing for half-crowns in Vigo Bay; the Milk, Muffin, and Crumpet Companies; the Apple, Pear, and Plum Associations; the National Gooseberry and Currant Company—will all be remembered as instances of that partial madness to which society is occasionally exposed,' &c. Similarly, in the speech on the Reform Bill, the stewards and country gentlemen acquire a grotesque individuality in the fortunes of Messrs. Vellum and Plumpkin. His habit of recapitulation at the close of an article greatly intensifies the impression of the whole. In this way he not only provides against any possible misconception as to his object, but sends away the reader with a

telling summary of fact and argument ringing in his ears. Thus the whole of the fallacies exposed in the article on Bentham, are gathered together at last in the Noodle's oration. In like manner, at the end of a masterly paper on the Catholic question, he winds up with a succession of spirited addresses to the several classes interested—to the No-Popery Fool—to the No-Popery Rogue—to the Honest No-Popery People—to the Catholics, &c. The final page of the paper on Female Education is an epitome of the whole, remarkable for vigorous compression. An article on America is concluded by a collection of antitheses, concentrating in a paragraph the vast advantages and little inconveniences of which that land of anomalies is made up. The ease and self-possession resulting from the consciousness of strength, preserved his simplicity inviolate, whatever might be his anxiety, his eagerness, his indignation. His steed of the pen, as the Orientals would say, never perspires. No other man has ever despatched so many questions in one irresistible, immortal sentence. He will kick out the life of a time-honoured sophism by a single foot-note. His parenthesis is terrible—a mere tap on the ear in passing, that smites like the sail of a windmill.

Barrow's celebrated enumeration of the varieties of wit might be completely illustrated with first-rate specimens from the writings of Sydney Smith alone. We have not another writer in our language who has united to a wit and humour so exuberant and multiform a treatment of his subject so comprehensive, so conscientious, so truly philosophical—not another with like measure of the perilous faculty, so completely preserved by heart and taste and judgment from ever injuring others by malice, or himself by folly.

Space would fail us to specify the many kinds of facetiousness with which his style abounds. The humorists have always claimed the privilege of word-coining, and the royal exercise of this prerogative distinguishes, while it never disfigures, the language of Sydney Smith. This kind of originality lies on the surface, and is the first to strike every eye. Sometimes he fashions strange com-

pounds from the homely Saxon idiom; sometimes he devises bigwig classical epithets, devised with scholarlike precision, comic from their formal gravity, so dexterously misplaced. Thus he speaks of a 'lexicon-struck' boy, of 'Malthus-proof' young people, of 'persecution-fanciers,' of 'wife and daughter bishops,' of 'butler bishops,' even of 'cook and housekeeper bishops;' he describes a measure as rejected 'with Percevalism and contempt;' and he enriches our mother-tongue with that serviceable hybrid 'Foolometer.' So when, in the academic vein, he laughs at pedants with sesquipedal words of his own, he will talk of 'frugivorous children,' and of 'mastigophorous schoolmasters;' of 'amorphous hats;' of 'fugacious' or 'plumigerous captains;' of 'lachrymal and suspirious clergymen;' of some people who are 'simious,' and others who are 'anserous;' he holds up, as 'the Anglophagi,' the placemen who prey upon the country; and designates our September sins by the awful name of 'perdricide.'

A mind of such happy vivacity will, of course, make the simile and the metaphor the frequent vehicles of fun, of satire, sometimes even of argument—fine and sharp as the Italian's 'dagger hid in a hair.' For example,—'Men of very small incomes, be it known to his Lordship, have often very acute feelings; and a curate trod on feels a pang as great as when a bishop is refuted.' Thus again, 'To be intolerably strict and harsh to a poor curate, who is trying to earn a morsel of hard bread, and then to complain of the drudgery of reading his answers, is much like knocking a man down with a bludgeon, and then abusing him for splashing you with his blood, and pestering you with his groans. It is quite monstrous that a man who inflicts eighty-seven new questions in theology upon his fellow-creatures, should talk of the drudgery of reading their answers.'

Of the pun—that Pariah among the jests—Sydney Smith furnishes but few examples, and those, with scarcely an exception, classical.

His mock-heroics are numerous, and all good. Take this sly hit

en passant at the pompous Latinised style: 'Not only are Church, King, and State allured by this principle of vicarious labour, but the pot-boy has a lower pot-boy, who, for a small portion of the small gains of his principal, arranges, with inexhaustible sedulity, the subdivided portions of drink, and, intensely perspiring, disperses, in bright pewter, the frothy elements of joy.' Who has not been convulsed by reading Peter Plymley's flatulent description of the scheme for subduing the French by stopping their medicinal supplies? 'What a sublime thought—that no purge can be taken between the Weser and the Garonne—that the bustling pestle is still—the canorous mortar mute, and the bowels of mankind locked up for fourteen degrees of latitude!'

A species of wit to which Sydney Smith is much addicted, we must call, The Particularization of the Hyperbole. When putting something impossible, or imagining something extravagant, he generally contrives to give it, by a sudden turn, a peculiar adaptation to the case in hand. For instance, speaking of Mrs. Trimmer, the well-known writer of children's books, he does not simply say that he knows she would on no account wittingly have done such injustice to Mr. Lancaster; but, 'if she had been aware of the extent of the mischief she was doing, she would have tossed the manuscript spelling-book in which she was engaged into the fire, rather than have done it.' Thus, again, any one might write, 'Nothing can persuade me that the antiquated superstitions of Rome are likely to resume their empire over the mind of this country.' What force and freshness does our wit give to the same thought—how he makes it flash and attract all eyes by expressing it this way,—'Tell me that the world will return again under the influence of the small-pox; that Lord Castlereagh will hereafter oppose the power of the court; that Lord Howick and Mr. Grattan will do each of them a mean and dishonourable action; that anybody who has heard Lord Redesdale speak once will knowingly and willingly hear him again; that Lord Eldon has assented to the fact of two and two making four, without shedding tears or expressing

the smallest doubt or scruple; tell me any other thing absurd or incredible, but, for the love of common sense, let me hear no more of the danger to be apprehended from the general diffusion of Popery.'

A remarkable feature in the satire of Sydney Smith is the way in which it is wrought in his argument, description, or narrative. It diffuses itself through his style like an atmosphere. The touches are slight and incidental, as though he could not help it—he has not to stop or go out of his road for the purpose. Thomas Fuller often embroiders his history with sarcastic touches and humorous allusions; they fringe a sentence, or they slash it by a parenthesis; they glitter on it, or they wind, like a button or a braid,—but with Sydney Smith this vein of wit is as it were *shot* into the fabric—it glances at every movement in the texture itself. In this respect he bears some resemblance to Thackeray, whose satire, and whose kindliness too, will come out in the most ordinary passages of a story—in the narration of the commonest incidents,—showing that this humour is no mere decoration of the structure he builds, but, in a manner, the very seasoning of its rafters. Sydney Smith and Thackeray are akin, too, in the tendency of their genius to confine itself to man and his interests. Dickens, in whom the poetical development is larger, has more sentiment and discursiveness. He will invest natural objects with character—inform with life scenery, buildings, and very furniture. The supernatural and the mysterious steal in among the oddities and the prose of our wondrous daily life. The strange sights of foreign lands suggest to Sydney Smith not poetical or spiritual analogies, but political or ecclesiastical ones—some reality in the actual world at hand. And these very suggestions furnish illustration of the way in which he scatters satire as he goes, instinctively, almost unawares. Thus he reads in the old travels of Brocquière that the Christians at Damascus are locked up every night,—'as they are (he remarks) in English workhouses, night and day, when they happen to be poor.' This is his reflection on being informed of the astonishing power of the tolling note

uttered by the South American campanero. 'The campanero may be heard three miles!—this little bird being more powerful than the belfry of a cathedral ringing for a new dean—just appointed on account of shabby politics, small understanding, and good family!' A description of the sloth sends his ideas home at once to his profession. 'This animal moves suspended, rests suspended, sleeps suspended, and passes his life in suspense—like a young clergyman distantly related to a bishop.' The boa constrictor reminds him, naturally enough, of the Court of Chancery.

How rapid and how keen are strokes like the following—the mere sparkle of his oars as they dash onwards: 'To buy a partridge (though still considered as inferior to murder) was visited with the very heaviest infliction of the law,' &c.—'Even ministers (whom nothing pesters so much as the interests of humanity) are at last compelled to come forward,' &c. 'We curse ourselves as a set of monastic madmen, and call out for the empty satisfaction of Mr. Perceval's head.'—'Crying out like a school-boy or a chaplain,' &c. 'The sixth commandment is suspended, by one medical diploma, from the north of England to the south.' 'If a man finds a partridge upon his ground eating his corn in any part of Kentucky or Indiana, he may kill it, even if his father is not a Doctor of Divinity.' 'A good novel is a book which makes you impatient of contradiction and inattentive,—even if a bishop is making an observation, or a gentleman, lately from the Pyramids, or the Upper Cataracts, is let loose upon the drawing-room.'

That brevity is the soul of wit is an aphorism which, like many other proverbial sayings, conveys but half the truth. It is the province of wit not merely to utter the happy saying which is born and complete upon the instant, but also to pursue an idea with inexplicable nimbleness of thought, through rovings, and windings, and transformations numberless, long after apprehensions less brisk and agile have dropped it in exhaustion. The chase is marvellous as the conflicts of genii in *The Arabian Nights*, where the fugitive spirit transforms himself, quick as thought, into hare, or worm, or

minnow; and the pursuer as swiftly hurries after in shape of hound, or bird, or pike. How long and fondly does the wit of Shakespeare buzz and hover about Bardolph's red nose; that volcanic promontory threatens to coruscate for ever; he scarce knows how to let it go. Sydney Smith is a mighty hunter of fancies in his way too; sometimes in wild fun; sometimes in earnest—that he may develop all the intrinsic absurdity of some notion which he combats. At one time he will stop and draw an imaginary picture; at another he will enter with grave irony into an arithmetical calculation. These methods are favourite weapons with Swift; but Smith is his equal in piquancy and force, and far superior in refinement both of thought and expression. Swift wields the quarter-staff; Smith draws a rapier.

A whole gallery full of pictures might be collected from his works, full of figures and of scenery selected or imagined with exquisite skill, and every touch and adjunct helping the designed effect of ridicule. Take only one, where he runs riot on the imagination of England invaded, laughably heaping together the most incongruous incidents, and pursuing his argument all the while. 'Old wheat and beans blazing for twenty miles round; cart mares shot; sows of Lord Somerville's breed running wild over the country; the minister of the parish wounded sorely in his hinder parts; Mrs. Plymley in fits; all these scenes of war an Austrian or a Russian has seen three or four times over; but it is now three centuries since an English pig has fallen in a fair battle upon English ground, or a farmhouse been rifled, or a clergyman's wife been subjected to any other proposals of love than the connubial endearments of her sleek and orthodox mate.' There are, besides, the pictures of the bishops at their pay-table (*Works*, iii. p. 230); of the ludicrous effects of an intimation by Lord John (p. 227); of the agonized scrivener who took the archbishop's oath for him (p. 222); of the ambitious baker and young Crumpet (p. 215); of the clergyman ideal and the clergyman actual (p. 250), a very striking pair; and all these are hung together in the apartment yclept 'Letters to Archdeacon Singleton:'

go, reader, and gaze upon these works of art, spirit-stirring, laughter-moving, rare as Sir Toby's catch that would 'draw three souls out of one weaver!'

'Ah, Mr. Smith!' said a Romish dignitary one day, 'you have such a way of putting things!' He had received a home-thrust. Among other 'ways,' the Canon had a habit of making speeches for his adversaries whereby they are sorely discomfited. He does so (with aggravating truthfulness) for the justice, when pleading on behalf of untried prisoners; he delivers a legal opinion in the person of a fifth judge in the article on mantraps and spring-guns; and he annihilates Noodle by making him open his mouth.

But beyond this legitimate exercise of the dramatic faculty there is the parable or apologue, in which the humour of Smith is unrivalled. Swift's *Tale of a Tub* and *History of John Bull* are allegorical caricatures of great power. The satire consists in reducing party characteristics to domestic personalities; in representing the dignified procedure of war, diplomacy, and government, under the homely mask of squabbles between relatives and neighbours—the husband and the wife—the master and the servant. The idea is excellent, but the execution coarse, even for those days. Such indirectness should not be protracted. The *History of John Bull* is sustained too long, and though frequently redeemed by most felicitous invention, grows rather tiresome by requiring reference to the key at every turn. The satiric fictions of Smith are always pertinent, brief, and delicate in their handling. The story of Mrs. Partington—the convenient passage from the *Dutch Chronicle* about the Synod of Dort—the fables concerning the physician and the apothecary in the reform speeches—and the account of the dinner which opens the sixth of *Peter Plymley's Letters*—are well-known specimens.

The difference is remarkable between the humour of Smith and of Charles Lamb, simple and genial as they both are. Smith is excellent at putting together a principle or a policy in a person—an adept at the representative, concentrative process. Lamb is most

fond of taking a person to pieces and unfolding a character—as great a master of the explicative art. How he peeps under foibles and oddities to look at the heart—lovingly dilates upon them—draws us near to strange bits of humanity, and holding a hand of each, makes us friends for ever! Smith does great service in bringing *down* to the common level some highflying pretence or title that gives itself airs, and claims to sit apart. Lamb does a service peculiar to himself in bringing some forlorn eccentricity *up* to the level of our ordinary sympathies. Lamb is subjective, individual—a man dreamy, whimsical, and unpractical. Smith moves in the stream of affairs, and has always work in hand. He is too intent on producing conviction to have time for the erratic quaintnesses and leisurely delights of Lamb's meditative fancy. For the same reason, and for higher yet, he can never descend to the tricks and starts, the *coups de théâtre*, the utter ribald nonsense, which offend us in Sterne. The very structure of the sentences marks the contrast—the rapid flow of Smith's, the shortness and slight connexion of Lamb's, as though deliberately uttered at intervals, in monologue, between the whiffs of the musing pipe. Sydney Smith all minds, in their order, will more or less appreciate; the common prosaic temperament gets out of patience with Lamb, and thinks him childish. Observe how the two speak of the rising convict colony of Sydney. Lamb writes to his friend at the antipodes, 'What must you be willing by this time to give for the sight of an honest man! You must almost have forgotten how *we* look. The kangaroos—your aborigines—do they keep their primitive simplicity un-Europe-tainted, with those little short fore-puds, looking like a lesson framed by Nature to the pickpocket! Marry, for diving into fobs they are rather lamely provided *à priori;* but if the hue and cry were once up, they would show as fair a pair of hind-shifters as the expertest loco-motor in the colony. . . . Do you grow your own hemp? What is your staple trade—exclusive of the national profession, I mean? Your locksmiths, I take it, are some of your great capitalists.' Sydney Smith expresses his fears that, in spite of the example of America, this

country will attempt to retain the colony under harsh guardianship after it has come to years of discretion. If so, 'endless blood and treasure will be exhausted to support a tax on kangaroos' skins; faithful Commons will go on voting fresh supplies to support a *just and necessary* war; and Newgate, then become a quarter of the world, will evince a heroism not unworthy of the great characters by whom she was originally peopled.'

In conclusion, we must repeat our protest against the mistake which regards wit as the principal endowment of that powerful and noble nature—against that popular error which persists in associating brilliance with reckless superficiality. With justice has Sterne entitled this narrow and vulgar notion the Magna Charta of stupidity and dulness. An illustration, he says, is not an argument —of course not—'nor do I maintain the wiping of a looking-glass clean to be a syllogism—but you all, your worships, may see the better for it.' Let that keen and massive intellect have due honour —and yet more, that brave, and tender and self-sacrificing heart. Let Sydney Smith be remembered as a man who fought in the van of reform, when reform was accounted infamous; who to his own sore loss, in a profession sadly eminent for servility and prejudice, stood forth against gigantic wrongs, and helped our country to its present home prosperity; who would put out the same energy in saving a poor village lad which he lent to aid a nation's cause; to whom vanity was a strange thing, and envy a thing impossible; and who used his dangerous and dazzling gifts never to adorn a falsehood or insult the fallen, always to crown truth with glory and to fill the oppressed with hope. With prophetic insight, he could discern, in humane solution of the problems of the present, the established axioms of a better future,—could be sure that the novel superstructure of to-day would become the venerated foundation of to-morrow; and to the life he lived and the cause he advocated may be applied, with fullest justice, those wise words which Tacitus has placed in the mouth of Claudius:—*Inveterascet hoc quoque: et quod hodie exemplis tuemur, inter exempla erit.*

THE CHRIST OF HISTORY.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN tells us, among other reminiscences of his youth, of a friend he had who often perplexed him sorely by his skill in disputing after the Socratic fashion. At last, young Franklin grew afraid of granting the most obvious proposition or making the smallest concession, lest from such admission he should be drawn on to a mortifying surrender of all he had undertaken to defend. And indeed no style of argument so tests the caution of an antagonist in defence, or so tries his temper on defeat. It comes round by such an unlooked-for circuit on the undefended rear. It encroaches like a habit, and may become invincible by a single indulgence. It seems to act so provokingly on the motto which an old proverb assigns to the assuming man,—'Make me a place where I may sit down, and I will make a place where I may lie down.' Yet no method of dialectic assault is more legitimate than this, or more permanently successful. Masterly is the process which, from a minute mustard-seed concession, can slowly develope large-limbed broadly-spreading consequences, never afterwards to be uprooted. It requires, however, considerable clear-headedness and no small attention duly to trace and estimate the growth of some such logical organism. On this account the more brilliant *reductio ad absurdum* will always be more serviceable for ordinary minds or a temporary purpose. But let the mind once have tested, with painful scrutiny, the slow steps of the argument which starts from a point where the adversaries are at one, and no conclusions are so likely as those thus

* *The Christ of History: an Argument grounded in the Facts of his Life on Earth.* By JOHN YOUNG, M.A.

arrived at, to find a place among the established and irreversible judgments of a lifetime.

Such an argument Mr. Young essays to conduct on a question of the highest moment. Consenting to take the minimum of fact which any sane scepticism will grant him concerning the earthly life of Christ, he shows, by a process of cumulative reasoning, that even this cannot fairly be accounted for except on the supposition that Jesus had 'more immediate, constant, and perfect access to the Infinite Fountain of Being, *than was possible to the constitution of a mere creature.*' Our author will place himself, for the sake of argument, at the zero of rationalism. Let there be only some such substratum of fact in the Gospels as even a Strauss is compelled to allow—let the miracle, if you please, be mere imagination—let the historian be liable, like all others, to mistake,—exclude as you will authoritativeness and supernaturalism,—grant only that whereupon all are agreed, the actual existence of Christ about the time professed, and that his life was, on the whole, what the Evangelists describe it,—and that admission gives a *humanity* inexplicable except on the ground of *Divinity.* Such is the proposition which Mr. Young enunciates and proceeds straightway to prove.

We are glad to see the question approached from this side—to find a field of argument so little wrought undertaken by a competent hand. Great is the caution requisite, if a reasoner on such ground would avoid assuming unawares what lies beyond the premises to which he has reduced himself. Many are the temptations to point out difficulties and follow out collateral arguments which suggest themselves so invitingly at every turn of the road. The end must be distinctly seen from the beginning, and the one object kept rigorously in view through every step he takes. The author possesses the candour, the steadiness, and self-control requisite for the worthy enterprise to which he has braced his powers. His division of the subject is judicious and well-sustained; his style lucid and masculine. His sentences go with girded loins. His German studies are not betrayed by cloudiness of thought or

uncouth long-windedness of speech. Neither is he guilty of that hortatory diffuseness or conventional rhetoric which too often enfeebles or vulgarizes our English treatment of religious topics.

The argument is arranged in three books:—First, The outer conditions of the life of Christ; Second, The work of Christ among men; Third, The spiritual individuality of Christ. We shall now follow Mr. Young over the ground thus marked out, and see in what way he expands the modicum of material allowed him toward his great conclusion, and how his logic, Dido-like, makes the poor bull's-hide of land enclose an affluent and many-towered Carthage.

To commence then with the outer conditions of the life of Christ, *his social position* is the first fact which presents itself for scrutiny. We see a poor artisan brought up among humble illiterate folk, and destitute alike of the culture or of the patronage which might have raised him from this obscurity to power and distinction. Character is no random product—a capricious violation of the harmony between cause and effect. The most original minds must bear some impress of their origin and of their age. Yet if we except the surmise in the heart of his mother (the cause of which must for the present argument be passed by, as professedly supernatural), there was nothing in his position to encourage the carpenter's son to anticipate greatness,—everything rather to quench aspiration had it been awakened. In the social circumstances surrounding Christ, there was nothing capable of building him up to the man he afterwards became. Such a product, from such causes, is an inexplicable anomaly, if he were simply one of us.

The *shortness of his earthly course* must be remembered. He dies at the age of thirty-three, after a public career of only three years,—dies, as the sceptic allows, because the world would tolerate him no longer, because he would not abandon his mission. We cannot indeed measure life by the clock. Striplings have died Methuselahs in intellect. Youth has originated mighty movements among men. But, for the purpose of social regeneration, time to mature a plan, or at least, adequately to transmit an impulse, is

47619

indispensable to the greatest and the wisest of us mortals. And here Mr. Young shall speak for himself.

'Whether his religion be regarded as a system of doctrines, or as a body of laws, or as a source of extraordinary influences, it is passing strange that *he* should have died in early life. His brief period of existence afforded no opportunity for maturing anything. In point of fact, while he lived he *did* very little, in the common sense of *doing*. He originated no series of well-concerted plans; he neither contrived nor put in motion any extended machinery: he entered into no correspondence with parties in his own country and in other regions of the world, in order to spread his influence, and obtain co-operation. Even the few who were his constant companions, and were warmly attached to his person, were not, in his lifetime, imbued with his sentiments, and were not prepared to take up his work in his spirit after he was gone. He constituted no society, with its name, design, and laws all definitively fixed and formally established. He had no time to construct and organize—his life was too short; and almost all that he did was to *speak*. He spoke in familiar conversation with his friends, or at the wayside to passers-by, or to those who chose to consult him, or to large assemblies, as opportunity offered. He left behind him a few spoken truths—not a line or word of writing—and a certain spirit incarnated in his principles, and breathed out from his life, and then he died.'—p. 32.

Then, again, from *intolerant and superstitious Judea*, and in Judea from degraded Galilee, and in Galilee from disreputable Nazareth, how shall such a spirit and such a purpose be produced? The poverty and obscurity of his early life and the ignominy of his death are facts which even the imaginative fishermen existing in the Straussian imagination must have seen were incompatible with their Messianic anticipations. The mythical attire will not fit the body of admitted fact. Surely such facts would have been carefully suppressed by such inventors. But so indisputably true are they,

that they are related without reserve, and (what is fatal to the mythical theory) without reluctance.

The second book is occupied with *the work of Christ among men.* Without fear, without artifice, without ostentation, Christ assumed the position of a teacher. Did the growing expectation of a Messiah find its way to the meditative village youth, and transform itself within his breast into the conception that he himself was to be the instrument of that deliverance? If so, he would have endeavoured to embody in himself the popular idea. No other, on our present supposition, could have been known to him. He would have claimed an earthly, not a spiritual kingdom. But we find him the corrector, not the creature, of the error which misled his time. He neither possesses, nor does he affect, to win adherents, the smallest sympathy with the proud exclusiveness of the Jew. He will be no mere conqueror, for his kingdom is to be above this world. He will be no mere Jew, for his kingdom is to embrace the world.

At the commencement of his ministry, we find Christ dealing with the Jewish nation as a whole,—endeavouring to awaken in every class the dormant sense of sinfulness—exposing hypocrisy—demolishing false confidence—summoning all to repentance—benignly rebuking, in order to reform, the disordered body of the time, and manifesting himself as 'the incarnate conscience of his age and nation.' Yet this man, otherwise so meek and lowly, betrays no sense of personal defect. The prophets—many of them men of extraordinary gifts, profound experience, holy life, venerable by age, by office, by miracle—could wrestle successfully with the evils they denounced, only as they felt and confessed their own share also in the universal sinfulness. They knew themselves, at the best, men of unclean lips among a people of unclean lips. With the sympathy that springs from the sense of personal conflict and infirmity, they yearned over those whom they condemned, and every thunder-cloud of judgment was laden with the tears of love. Strangely ignorant must he be of human nature, who supposes that

any one of us can effectually reprove the sinner while seeming himself to disclaim sin. Expostulation becomes a taunt, and rebuke a heartless arrogance, if the would-be reformer says, or appears to say, 'No seed of your too prolific sin-harvest hath ever found lodgment within my own bosom.' But Christ, pre-eminently poor in spirit, proclaims his sinlessness. He is our fellow in all but sin. Either, then, he possessed an extraordinary nature, or he did not possess ordinary virtue. The alternative is this; either a real immunity, or an immoderate self-righteousness,—never man so pure, or never man so proud.

For reasons at which we have already glanced, it is impossible to suppose that the remarkable doctrines attributed to Christ were devised for him, and put into his mouth by his disciples. In the sayings of Christ, we must have, therefore, the mind of Christ. From the fountain of that mind alone flow the truths contained in the Gospels. In that mind, so little favoured by circumstance, how should there spring up that idea, so surpassingly grand, of an approaching spiritual kingdom into which men should press from east and west, from north and south? This kingdom is the kingdom of truth. Let the main truths which constitute it be examined.

In an age and in a country deeply sunk in practical materialism, Christ proclaimed the reality and greatness of the *soul*. An impartial observer of Rabbinical religion might have supposed that God required for his service regimen and lustrations—the contraction of certain facial muscles—extension of the hands—exercitations of the voice, but not the homage of thought, affection, and conscience. The whole of Christ's teaching rests on the fact he announces, that the soul does truly constitute the man—that his spiritual nature is of priceless value. That the soul is, and that it is all this, he does not prove by argument; he states the truth as one of which men had the proof within them—a neglected witness, to which a fallen nature had refused to hearken. It remained for Jesus of Nazareth to turn into broad sunshine the faint light which rested on the soul's life and immortality. The natural immortality of the soul is

a scholastic fiction. The words can only have their truth when understood as conveying the truism that the soul shall continue always to exist if God so appoints. Philosophy knows too little of what spirit is to be able to prove to reason its necessary perpetuity. The aspirations and capacities of our spiritual nature afford a presumption that it may enjoy some future larger range of being. But the certainty of the soul's eternal existence is announced with authority by Him who spake as never man spake,—and that certainty based not on metaphysical but on moral grounds. Death is the removal of hindrances to the voluntary tendency of the soul, whether upward or downward.

Concerning the future state, there are two extremes of opinion; the one we may call the *idealist*, the other, the *formalist* view of retribution. According to the former, retribution accomplishes itself, in great measure at least, in time. The righteous man is already in heaven, for heaven is rather a state than a place. To turn away from the present to a future external reward is mercenary. Love should be disinterested. Above hope and above fear, the Christian should repose in a world of his own,—an atmosphere of holy thought, blessed by the sense of present indissoluble union with God. There may be indeed a future state of bliss—and scarcely anywhere is such a condition denied—but the highest form of love will not be occupied with the anticipation of it. This subjective extreme is the reaction from its opposite, the formalist conception, which fails adequately to link this life and the next. This is the error of a lower order of mind. It is slow to see in the future the natural development of the present. Assuming in Romanism its most portentous form, it makes heaven literally matter of purchase. A sacrament annihilates, as with the touch of a conjuror's wand, the relationship of cause and effect. On the other hand, a standard of superhuman virtue is set up for the saintly few. The holy man fits himself for heaven in proportion as he unfits himself for earth. The graces most extolled are those most useless, and he prepares for repose, not by toil but by inaction.

The Christian doctrine lies between the subtilty of the one apprehension and the grossness of the other. We do not find the apostle Paul trying to fancy himself in heaven already, or vexing poor persecuted Hebrews by telling them that it is selfish to look forward to the rest that remaineth for the people of God. To him, earth is childhood; heaven, maturity. In this tabernacle he groans, being burdened. And yet he sees in the most strenuous exercise of manhood the best preparation for a state above mortality. He does not mistake an enervating contemplation for an almost angelic spirituality. Says the monk, 'I approach the angelic life most nearly in proportion as I separate myself from man to gaze on God.' Says the apostle, 'I approach that life most nearly in proportion as I serve my fellows. Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them that are heirs of salvation?'

There is an obvious disposition, in some quarters, to approach too nearly the idealist extreme upon this question. There is an unnatural refinement, we think, in the teachings of Mr. Maurice here. To minds of his own order, his doctrine is attractive and not gravely harmful; but it is a departure from the robust, practical sense of Scripture, too strained for permanence, too impalpable for the wear and tear of our daily conflict. Yet some excess in this direction ought not to blind our eyes to the fact that Christ does most emphatically represent sin as so much present death, and renewal as virtually life eternal. Mr. Young appears to us fairly to express the lessons given us by our Lord on this matter, in the following passage:—

'Jesus Christ teaches that sin *is* perdition; not that at some future day it shall produce death, but that it *is* death. From first to last, throughout all its course, at every moment, moral evil is only death. Unless it be extirpated, the soul can only die; it may exist in the sense of simply *being*, but it is really dying rather than living; and for ever, its existence is a death, a process of perdition, whose final issue lies behind an impenetrable veil. But life is the destiny of that nature which has been emancipated from moral evil.

There is a holier and mightier vitality than that of the animal frame, or even than the physical life of the mind; that is, its power to think, feel, and resolve. There is a life of life to man. God is the spring of pure being. Separated from him by ignorance or false views, by conscious guilt, distrust, and enmity, the soul carries in it the seeds of death, and in order to live, it must be restored to God, and God must be restored to it, to its knowledge, confidence, and love. It is *this life of God in man* which Christ's Gospel teaches is eternal; which not only shall never be extinguished, but is essentially and necessarily immortal. On earth, in heaven, anywhere, everywhere throughout the universe, this is *the eternal* life; the only eternal life known to Christianity—union or reunion of the created mind with God. It is this which shall survive uninjured the separation of soul and body. That separation shall not harm the nobler being, but the spiritual faculties shall be improved instead of being enfeebled by the crisis through which they have passed; and the life of life within, unscathed, untouched, shall find itself in a new and genial sphere, with eternity for its irreversible inheritance. The soul's endless being is intelligence, rectitude, purity, love, and all goodness.'—p. 110.

The language of Christ concerning the Divine Nature was a perpetual proclamation of the Fatherhood of God. The Almighty was the *Creator* of the world, but the *Father* of our spirits. Though man had wandered, this relationship existed still. The power, the wisdom, the purity of Divine Perfection, were manifested in a father's pity and a father's love. While, therefore, the erring wisdom of the world had divided Deity between the lights and shadows of Dualism—while Polytheism had outnumbered men with gods—while speculation had placed at the summit of the universe a philosophic phantom or an adamantine fate—while a corrupted Judaism believed in a divine patron, partial to the height of its own pride, vindictive to the height of its own resentment, the son of a carpenter at Nazareth reveals the Father of all mankind, seeking to win back his lost ones to his bosom.

Thus disclosing the soul to itself in its need, and God to the soul in his mercy, did the Saviour fulfil his ministry of reconciliation. He spoke of himself as the good Shepherd who was to lay down his life for the sheep. Through his life and death, a renewal should be brought about of the old relationship between the parent and the child, knowledge and love and confidence restored, a gracious spiritual presence guiding all within, a watchful Father-Providence controlling all without.

Now to compare such teaching on the great problem of the soul with human religious systems, is to argue at once from the work of such a teacher to his divinity. Only on a supposition practically equivalent to this, at the very least, can any approach be made towards accounting for the disparity we find. The monstrous forms of Eastern superstition—Hindooism, with its worship of mere power, over-awing indolent souls by measureless multiplication of space and time, striking men into an amazed submission rather than winning their love, so affluent in fantasy, so poor in passion—with such a system the Christian truth will scarcely deign comparison. Still less with that wide-spread creed bearing the name of Buddha, which banishes responsibility and craves annihilation. To come to forms of belief less unnaturally aberrant. The complex subtilties of Rabbinical tradition had elaborated into gross corruption the external and material element of Judaism. Jesus of Nazareth, concerning whom it was asked, 'How knoweth this man letters having never learned?' was not merely a reformer in restoring the escaped spirit of the old economy; he was more: he transcended its highest teaching. The only men to whom he could go for instruction had fallen behind the Old Testament. He went beyond it. The heathen world, again, presents us in Stoicism and Platonism with its noblest products. And here, Mr. Young's treatment of his subject is especially judicious. With genial appreciation, he puts in a fair light the best results of ancient philosophy. There is indeed no necessity for diminishing by one hair's-breadth the full estimate of such efforts, in order to make more cogent the Christian argument.

The colossal pride of the Stoic offends us; his melancholy straining after apathy moves our pity. Yet to a blind destiny what so wisely opposed as a stony heart? We admire that devotion to Virtue for its own sake—that satisfaction with inward self-approval, above praise, above blame, which make up the '*Justum ac tenacem propositi virum.*' The spirit of that line, *Victrix causa Diis placuit sed victa Catoni*, will remain for ever grand. The kingdom in the breast of the ideal wise man of the Stoics—that realm of thought and will so mighty, so calm, so impregnable, was the endeavour of heathendom, great in its very failure, to realize that inward peace which Christianity alone imparts.

Turning to Platonism, we find in the teacher of Xenophon and Plato the purest, the wisest, the noblest nature to which heathendom could give birth. We see Socrates poor to the last, yet making many rich in aspiration and peaceful self-control. Tried for his life, we hear him declare that he will obey God rather than man—that he will suffer death rather than cease to elevate his countrymen. His faith in a glorious future enables him to look on death as an emancipation. A martyrdom so sublime was but the fitting close of a life that had listened ever to the voice of conscience as to a god within. As we contemplate with admiration such a character, and such a doctrine, we feel that Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria could not have been altogether wrong in believing that the Eternal Word had indeed aided the struggle of mankind yearning toward the light—that as the Old Economy was to prepare the way for the Saviour in one direction, so also was philosophy in another—that God was not the God of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also.

Yet the appearance of Socrates is not inexplicable—not an anomaly in experience and in history. The contrast here between the wise man of Athens and the promised Messiah is obvious at a glance. Socrates, and his followers, who founded Platonism as a school, were learners and teachers for many years. They began their professed work in middle life. Christ was cut off after three

years of public labour, dying at the age of thirty-three. The Grecian sages had gathered in, by converse and by travel, the results of past inquiry. Yet their teaching at the best was comparatively imperfect, often vacillating and uncertain, sometimes contradictory. They labour painfully toward heights they presently lose. Christ never hesitates,—betrays no inward struggle between hope and doubt,—speaks simply and authoritatively, as one to whom truth was native. He goes down deeper into the soul's hurt and danger; he leaves far behind their brightest surmise as to the soul's possibility and hope. What their wisest and most cultured could not with all appliances accomplish—the bringing forth of the unconscious desire of all nations—that is realized by the young, the obscure mechanic of Galilee.

How, then, is this difference, not in degree but in kind, between the work of Christ and that of all others, to be explained? An outer life of such disadvantage and a work so surpassing were 'combined in fact.' How, asks our author, can they be harmonized in principle? The world has had its men sent from God, blessing, elevating their fellows. But far apart, in his life and in his doctrine, stands Jesus above all these. The principle which explains their appearance is too narrow to account for his. He was not a mere vehicle of truth—an ecstatic organ for the utterance of lessons beyond his own comprehension. He *was* the truth he announced. It springs evidently from within—is no imposition or passivity, coming from without. No doubt the Almighty is not to be limited in his communications. That one teacher should rise superior in his doctrine to all others, is no necessary proof of his divinity. But *such* a superiority on the part of a creature could only be conceived as the result of a possession, as it were, by Deity,—of such an influx from the divine mind as should reduce to inaction,—should absorb, and for the time annihilate, the ordinary faculties of man. But scepticism, surely, will not pretend that Christ was an organ of this description. To accept the facts which scepticism even must receive, and to take up a notion such as this, is to maintain a contradiction

in terms. The mediate doctrine which pronounces Jesus an angelic nature, or the first of creatures, creates a fiction which does not after all remove the difficulty. With justice, therefore, does the author urge the conclusion, that since Christ could not possibly have been merely man, he must have been God in man.

'We assert, without fear of contradiction by any competent and candid thinkers, that under the conditions amidst which Jesus was placed, such knowledge and such spiritual opulence and power were morally and even physically impossible to a mere human mind. God never acts in defiance of the nature and laws of the soul, but always in harmony with them: we speak with reverence, God *could not* act in defiance of the laws of the soul which he has himself established. This is not the region of miracle, so called; and mere physical omnipotence has no place here. Mind is not to be forced. God could destroy the soul; but, continuing to be what it is, God can act upon it, only in harmony with its laws. Now, the fact that a young man, only thirty-three, a poor man, a Galilean carpenter, uneducated, unprivileged, and unpatronized, *rose to* a profound, far-reaching, lofty wisdom, and to an illumination and wealth of soul which are without example in history, stands in direct contradiction to all other psychological experiences, and to all ascertained psychological laws. But it is a fact, nevertheless; and there must be *some* ground on which it can be explained. Jesus *cannot* have been merely what he seemed to be, and his mind *cannot* have been merely human, and in all respects constituted and conditioned as other human minds are. In sober reason, there is no choice left to us but to believe in an organic, an essential, a constitutional difference between him and all men; in other words, in an incarnation, in this unparalleled instance, of Divinity in humanity.'—p. 190.

The third part of Mr. Young's argument rests on what he terms the 'spiritual individuality of Christ.' The consciousness of Christ, of which we must believe his words the true expression, was altogether peculiar in its forms. Throughout his life, to the very last, he gives utterance to a sense of sinlessness; and not only of personal

perfection but of official greatness, when he assumes in his own name such a prerogative as the forgiveness of sins. Such assumption could not have been suggested by the disciples, slow of heart to believe. An ambitious motive is utterly at variance with the facts of his life. Neither could heated enthusiasm have carried away one whose words and actions were so eminently those of deliberate self-possession. Was it a mistake—an overrating of the real compass of his mission? How is such error reconcilable with the great truth he has confessedly brought into the world? Was he who surpassed earth's wisest under most grave delusion all the while? Again, in his whole life there is a symmetry, a oneness, altogether free from the partiality which stamps with imperfection our most conspicuous human virtues. The humanity is complete; no one attribute is sacrificed to another. His life was 'a manifestation, not an effort.' If we look to his motive we find that obloquy cannot provoke, that applause cannot win forth, the slightest exhibition of self. His whole life is expended in blessing and originating blessing.

It is not difficult to imagine the reply which will be advanced by one desirous of avoiding the conclusion to which the author would reduce him. Such an objector will answer,—'I admit that ordinary principles, such as those which serve to explain other facts of history, experience, and observation, fail to explain these—to account for the attainment of so much perfection under so much external disadvantage. But I call in an extraordinary principle. I am prepared to grant that Christ did receive for his great work extraordinary protection, illumination, power, spiritual culture, from the hand of the Supreme. Who shall set a bound to the divine bestowments to men?'

'Who indeed?' we answer. If Jesus was merely man, how is it that there have been no others like him? If he, despite such hindrance, could be raised to such height—to absolute moral perfection—why have no others, under circumstances far more kindly, ever reached attainments to be compared with his? It is a question, as Mr. Young properly reminds his readers, not of mere official adap-

tation; it relates to personal excellence—'to the great cause of truth and virtue in the world.' What God did for that cause in this one instance, he might have done in others—in a succession of similar manifestations. The exclusive possession of such excellence in this one case points to a something which rendered that possible to Him which was *not possible* to any other, or else the goodness of God must be impugned. Incarnation at once involves such a separation—such a constitutional disparity, between him and all others. Mysterious as the doctrine is, it inflicts no gratuitous mystery upon men; it removes an importunate difficulty. It furnishes the only answer to questions which the thoughtful mind cannot fail to urge. Recognise in Christ a being who appears once for all time to save, in the great crisis of the world's history,—one possessing not merely a higher office, but a higher incommunicable nature, and his spiritual perfection is an anomaly no longer. It is then a postulate, not a problem. The miraculous circumstances of his appearance and of his disappearance from among men assume their due aspect of fitness. Miracle satisfies a natural demand.

Such, in its outline, is the argument fairly founded on the admitted facts of Christ's earthly life. Like the reasoning which sustains the proof for revelation as a whole, that which maintains this section of it is essentially cumulative in its character. With the reflecting it will possess the more weight on this account. Comprehensive as it is, it constitutes, moreover, but one line of proof in favour of the Divinity of Christ. But it takes that course which a large proportion of the unsettled or inquiring mind among us will be best disposed to follow. Whether such readers may choose to regard Mr. Young as a guide or as an antagonist, they will find him honest and trustworthy in the one capacity, and candid and courteous in the other.

LEWES'S LIFE AND WORKS OF GOETHE.*

THE successful biographer of Goethe must possess no ordinary combination of qualities and accomplishments. He has to portray a literary career of twice the common duration, and of seven times the usual versatility. He has to penetrate and analyse a mind which found an equal interest in the serene creations of art and in the intricate details of science. He has to criticise the contents of a long row of volumes, claimed on the one side by the Theatre, on the other by the Museum. He has to estimate the workmanship of the faculty which combines, and of the faculty which dissects—productions about which the brush and the scalpel, the chisel and the microscope, have been employed by turns. For where is the admirer of Goethe who never dreamed that Götz appeared to him holding the 'typical plant' in his iron hand; that Mephistopheles exhibited, with a grin, the intermaxillary bone; and that the tears of Werther were a shower, on which a rainbow spread itself, to illustrate the Theory of Colours? Once more—he who would give us a life of Goethe has to transport himself, body and soul, into the alien world of German society and German literature. He has to give us thence an accurate survey of the inflowing tendencies of the time which filled and stimulated the mind of Goethe during a period of intense excitement and prodigal production. He must show us next how the outflowing streams from that fertilizing genius ran among the hills, as rivulets from some lofty tarn, and

* *The Life and Works of Goethe; with Sketches of his Age and Contemporaries. From published and unpublished sources.* By G. H. LEWES. Two vols. Nutt.

widely watered all the plains of Germany. And this our biographer must do without losing his hold upon the interest of English readers, to most of whom the names of the second-rate German literati are names, and nothing more.

In the case of Mr. Lewes, the tastes and the acquirements thus requisite are assembled together with a felicity somewhat rare in the annals of biography. He is himself a man of letters. An acute critic, he possesses, at the same time, no mean power of original production. His literary knowledge is extensive; his taste catholic. The masterpieces of the modern literature of Europe are familiar to him in their original languages. His mind is clear-sighted and singularly agile. Such characteristics fit him readily to enter into the cosmopolitan manysidedness of Goethe. Stoicism is odious to him: enthusiasm is apt to awaken his quick sense of the ludicrous: speculation he will analyse for you to a nicety, and fling away the shreds as worthless. Here again is an advantage for the biographer of Goethe. The artist and the sage of Weimar—so little speculative, so active, and yet so calm—is a man after his own heart. Mr. Lewes will be sure to erect no austere ideal to the disadvantage of his hero. He need never take a step out of his way to admire, to sympathize with, or to defend him. What many have blamed as Epicurean indifference in Goethe, would have been praised by Mr. Lewes as good sense, had he never contributed a single stone to his monument. In Goethe's preference of natural science to metaphysics our author shared, long before the design of the present work had entered his mind. Mr. Lewes lays before his readers an adequate supply of facts, and with sufficient fairness, to enable them to judge for themselves concerning the true character of the poet. So long as a biographer will do this, it is better for his biography that he should err by temperament, rather in the same direction as his hero than in the opposite. We have all an instinctive feeling that the estimate of kindred minds concerning us is most likely to be the true one. For love gives insight; and the labour of love is, for the most part, a successful labour.

One excellent feature in this book will render it no small service —the care which has been taken not to demand too much from the reader. No pains have been spared to render into English, in a manner,—not German *words* merely,—but German *life*. The story is told in such a way that we are insensibly placed in the position necessary to its full enjoyment. The survey of German literature, the descriptions of Weimar scenery and Weimar society, are only the most conspicuous among many similar helps and illustrations, welcome to every reader. The style is clear and sparkling; the interest never flags; the book cannot be laid aside unfinished. This *Life and Works of Goethe* will live among the best biographies in our language.

Let the reader consider, too, what this work *might* have been. With many writers, the two volumes must have swollen to six. Let any one consult the list, in the Appendix, of works called forth from the German press by *Werther* alone. Let the correspondence, the controversies, the commentaries, be called to mind, that have shot forth, taken root, and propagated about that gigantic banyan trunk, the *Sämmtliche Werke*. We shudder as we think of what we have escaped, and we style thrice-blessed Mr. Lewes's power of shelving the uninteresting. Suppose we had been lost in a forest of filed letters;—the Germans of those days wrote *such* letters—interminable, after-æsthetic-tea-in-select-circles-to-be-read lucubrations, of inscrutable profundity. Suppose we had been blinded and swallowed up in such a sand-whirlwind of minute and unintelligible facts as some writers delight to send flying about men's ears. How miserable the reader's fate, had he been swept away among the icebergs of allegory to those frigid and misty realms where move symbolic forms, bright only with the prismatic hues of an idle rhetoric! Under the guidance of Mr. Lewes we travel swiftly, always on *terra firma*, in sober daylight, in clear sunshine, seeing afar the mountains of German erudition, and hearing untroubled (as an occasional rumble underground) some reverberation from its deepest utterance.

The Germans themselves are emphatically acknowledging their

debt to our countryman by beginning already to translate his book. Not only have his repeated visits to Germany been highly opportune, but he has been more active, when there, than lies in the nature of the lethargic Teuton. The leviathan biography of Viehoff, and the very able-bodied book of Schaefer, were achieved without a visit to Weimar, without any inquiry among the localities most rich in traditions of the poet. So little is the German mind disposed to trouble itself with those accessories of external detail which are of such interest to us. Here, as elsewhere, old Time is a double-dealer. While he adds, with one hand, to our store of minor facts concerning Goethe, he lessens it with the other. A few years liberate, one after the other, little collections of correspondence; but these same years also carry away those who could enrich us with their personal reminiscences. The inquiries of Mr. Lewes have been prosecuted late enough to reap the advantage of the first, and not too late to be altogether deprived of the last. He has kept quick-eyed watch on the banks of his river, and as each flood from the hills has swollen it, and set floating again the land-locked waifs and strays of information—those boughs, and leaves, and blossoms that lay coiled together by many a frothy eddy in its little creek,—he has been at hand to intercept the drift. And while other relics on the surface, lower down the stream, have been borne more swiftly away by the accelerated current, his nets have been spread for them also, at due interval, so that he has never let slip the old while hastening to secure the new.

To taste at once the quality of our author's style, let the reader quaff the following cup of welcome, wherewith Mr. Lewes announces the advent of his young Jupiter:—

'Johann Wolfgang Goethe was born on the 28th of August, 1749, as the clock sounded the hour of noon, in the busy town of Frankfurt-on-the-Maine. The busy town, as may be supposed, was quite heedless of what was then passing in the corner of that low, heavy-beamed room in the *Grosse Hirsch Graben*, when an infant, black, and almost lifeless, was watched with agonizing anxiety—an anxiety

dissolving into tears of joy, as the aged grandmother exclaimed to the pale mother: '*Räthin, er lebt!*'—'he lives!' But if the town was heedless, not so were the stars, as astrologers will certify: the stars knew who was gasping for life beside his trembling mother, and in solemn convocation they prefigured his future greatness. Goethe, with a grave smile, notes this conjunction of the stars, as Condivi, in his *Vita di Michelagnolo*, does of his hero, *without* a smile.

'Whatever the stars may have betokened, this August, 1749, was a momentous month to Germany, if only because it gave birth to the man whose influence has been greater than that of any man since Luther. A momentous month in very momentous times. It is the middle of the eighteenth century; a period when the movement carried out by Luther was passing from religion to politics, and freedom of thought was translating itself into liberty of act. From theology, the movement had communicated itself to philosophy, morals, and politics. The agitation was still mainly in the higher classes, but it was gradually descending to the lower. A period of deep unrest, big with events which would distend the conceptions of all men, and bewilder some of the wisest. A few random glances at the 'notables' may serve to call up something like the historical presence of the epoch.

'In that month of August, Madame du Châtelet, the learned and pedantic *Uranie* of Voltaire, died in childbed, leaving him without a companion, and without a counsellor to prevent his going to the Court of Frederick the Great. In that year Rousseau was seen in the brilliant circle of Mad. d'Epinay, discussing with the Encyclopædists, declaiming eloquently on the sacredness of maternity, and going home to cast his newborn infant into the basket of the Foundling Hospital. In that year Samuel Johnson was toiling manfully over his *English Dictionary;* Gibbon was at Westminster, trying with unsuccessful diligence to master the Greek and Latin rudiments; Goldsmith was delighting the Tony Lumpkins of his district, and the 'wandering bear-leaders of genteeler sort,' with his

talents, and enjoying that 'careless idleness of fireside and easy chair,' and that 'tavern excitement of the game of cards, to which he looked back so wistfully from his first hard London struggles.' In that year Buffon, whose *scientific* greatness Goethe was one of the first to perceive, and whose influence has been so profound, produced the first volume of his *Histoire Naturelle.* In that year Mirabeau and Alfieri were tyrants in their nurseries, and Marat was an innocent boy of five, toddling about in the Val de Travers, untroubled by phantoms of *les aristocrats.*

'This was the period in which Goethe was born. Of the city—Frankfurt—he has given us a loving picture. No city in Germany seems so well fitted for the birthplace of this cosmopolitan poet. It was rich in speaking memorials of the past, remnants of old German life, lingering echoes of the voices which sounded through the middle ages; memorials, such as the town within a town, the fortress within a fortress, the walled cloisters, the various symbolical ceremonies still preserved from feudal times, the Jews' quarter, so picturesque, so filthy, and so strikingly significant. But if Frankfurt was thus representative of the past, it was equally representative of the present. The travellers brought there by the Rhine-stream, and by the great northern roads, made it a representative of Europe, and an emporium of commerce. It was thus a centre for that distinctively modern idea—industrialism—which began, and must complete, the destruction of Feudalism. This twofold character Frankfurt retains to the present day. The storks, perched upon the ancient gables of the past, look down upon the varied bustle of fairs held by modern commerce in the ancient streets.'—Vol. i. pp. 17—19.

So in quaint and bustling Frankfurt are to pass the early years of the boy Goethe—that old-fashioned, handsome, precocious child. A pleasant childhood! Not relegated to the detestable barbarities which great public schools like ours legitimize; but spent, for the most part, under the family roof-tree. Those young days are a garden which the father and the mother divide between them. On

the one side are formal walks and terraces, precisian avenues of clipped trees, and all the methodism of rectangular horticulture. On the other, mimic ruins, glens and waterfalls,—what seems a slip of wild sweetness from some tract of romantic landscape that might have glistened and blossomed in the vale of Avalon. For the father schooled him by mathematic rule, training up a life-long love of order. The young mother made her boy a friend—told him tales of the sunny south, and fed him with wonders from fairy-land. From him came intellectual strength and legislative will: from her, the gladsome buoyant spirit—the poetry of a poet's life. The boy of eight years old writes German, Greek and Latin, French and Italian. So precocious is the receptive faculty. He fills his mind with images from his classics, from travels, from story-books, from the poets of the day, and invents tales of his own to tell his school-fellows. So active, already, is the faculty which produces. He has a whole heap of stories and lessons written ready to teach his little brother Jacob, who was carried off by the small-pox. So affectionate, as well as clever, is this learned child.

At sixteen Goethe was sent to college, entering Leipsic University to study jurisprudence, regarding a professor's chair as the summit of his ambition. He had loved mathematics as little as poetic natures usually do. He soon began to abhor logic; and presently grew tired of law. Some medical students, with whom he used to dine, spoke much of botany, of Linnæus, and of Buffon. The impressionable Goethe, smitten by every novelty in the world of knowledge, prefers their pursuits to his own. The flower-dust is fairer than the book-dust—pollen more wondrous than the pandects, and nature ever dearer than abstractions. Meanwhile, he learns even more from Dr. Böhme's accomplished wife than from that learned law-professor himself. She takes him in hand—and how many youths have been similarly indebted to the refined tuition of woman. She tells him he really must not wear such coats,—he must correct that provincial accent,—he must learn to speak without that Sancho-like profusion of proverbs. Let him sit down, and

she will teach him how to take a hand at cards, like other folk. Verses, indeed! Let her read them. Ah! he is quite mistaken; they are clever, but he can do better. He shall do better. His models themselves wrote wretchedly. He must surpass them, at least. So Goethe is polished, and begins to walk with an air, and will make a figure in society, with that fine face of his, and those large resplendent eyes. As to his productions at Frankfurt, he gives them to the flames. He will go forward now, for he has burnt his boats. And wisely, too. Frau Böhme was right. The lost fleet was but a nutshell Armada, launched in a little pool. Next, he sees life in company with a rollicking blade named Behrisch,—falls in love, and is righteously rejected by the young lady for returning her affection with restless and impatient suspicions. He finds his way behind the scenes of Leipsic society, and embodies his sense of his own faults and those of others in a drama called the *Fellow Sinners*, inculcating universal charity, since all are in some way culprits.

Two facts are here significant; one, that young Goethe should have attracted so many confidences,—should have become the depositary for domestic secrets, and initiated into the mystery of the skeleton-closet, in so many families. There is a certain class of men who do remarkably attract to themselves (like magnets laid down among the filings of a workman's board), the ill-fated, nondescript particles of fact, thrown off by the great turning-lathe of society. But such men have always three qualities,—sympathy, judgment, reticence. A kindly readiness of interest in the sorrows or perplexities of others, and a steady principle of honour, must have been conspicuous in Goethe, despite his random way at times. Confidence is not for chatterboxes, nor weathercocks, nor unsunned rugged natures; the best hearts never suffer daws to peck at them a second time. Let Goethe, then, have the credit due in this matter. Observe, also, the other peculiarity to be noticed here—the tendency to turn life into art—to represent his personal experience in song or dramatic action.

Goethe belongs to the *objective* order of poets. His sphere is reality. It may seem to the English reader (wearied with the perpetual antithesis of objective and subjective) that those artists should be called subjective who are limited, like Goldsmith, almost wholly to scenes and persons within their own experience. But, in fact, the question between realist and idealist is one of quality, not quantity. There is no little ambiguity in our æsthetic language arising from the fact that there are two kinds of invention and two kinds of experience. There is invention of one kind in Milton's conception of Satan's journey out of hell. There is invention of another kind in the situations brought about in *Twelfth Night* by the deceptive resemblance of Sebastian and his sister Viola. There is experience of one kind gained by every youth who is enamoured—is jealous—is ambitious—is disappointed. There is experience of another kind, accumulating every day, as we observe character, and become expert in the practical affairs of life. The invention which combines or clothes ideas belongs, for the most part, to the genius which is eminently subjective. The invention which develops and reconstructs character and incident is rather objective. Shelley and Jean Paul are subjective artists. The objective tendency predominates in Scott and Thackeray. Fleur de Marie could only exist in the imagination of Eugene Sue. But Pendennis is frequently to be seen, and so is his uncle, the Major. While Sir James Graham blandly proses, every one must feel that Pecksniff has actual existence. The counterpart of Juliet's nurse may still be met with in the picturesque streets of Verona. These are objective characters, yet about these, also, the subjective faculty must be busy. For to interest the reader in them adequately, they must talk more cleverly, more wittily, or more absurdly, than in actual life. They must be the originals *plus* the author. They must be sufficiently themselves to escape mere caricature or any unnatural profusion of good things; sufficiently his to be something more than themselves,—to exhibit in strong relief the culminating point of their nature. Many

poets, gifted with a preponderance of the objective faculty, have yet commenced their career by attempts altogether subjective. They have sought remote sources of interest. They have given us, not nature, but a solution of nature. They have seen all through the medium of some one humour, aspiration, or regret. The world, for them, is shut in a lachrymatory, or shows obscurely through the folds of a spangled gauze. By degrees they forget themselves, and begin to represent things directly, as they actually are. Thus it was with Byron. But Goethe began with experience, and drew his first sketches from the life.

Yet he could scarcely have seen life in any very great variety of aspects, at the time when he thus began to attempt its picture. It may appear remarkable that so many of the best dramatic writers should have been young men. In fact, youth, while gaining its experience, is best fitted to record it. There is much attraction in that distinct and brilliant impress which has been just stamped on the last new metal in the resounding mint of time. Much is effected, moreover, by that inward experience, to which allusion has been made, wherein youth may be a great proficient. The school of the heart counts no terms. Where the poetical or the dramatic faculty exists in large measure, there we always find the gift of *Anticipation*, as Goethe calls it,—an experience that seems almost innate. Thus young Goethe may correctly surmise how a certain character will express itself under the influence of love, hate, terror. If exhibitions of passion thus truthful be adroitly arranged, a dramatic success is assured. The stage exhibits the concentrated effects, not the processes of action. But for minute description of external details, or for the development of a series of incidents, a far greater amount of practical knowledge, and much more extensive observation, is necessary. Some acquaintance with law and lawyers is requisite if a writer would well conduct a story whose *dénouement* turns upon a suit in chancery. Some knowledge of business is demanded for a novel which assigns an important part to the com-

mission of a forgery or the failure of a bank. Thus riper years and fuller information bring more advantage to narrative than to dramatic fiction.

The attention of our versatile student was next turned to Art. He studied drawing under Oeser, with but moderate success. But from this teacher he learnt 'that the ideal of beauty is simplicity and repose; that therefore no youth can be a master.' Though unsuccessful as a draughtsman, Goethe's time was not wasted by such endeavours. In the woof of life the broken threads are gathered up, and woven in again with care. Nothing is lost. Whether triumphant or abortive in detail, the curiosity, the ambition, the very imitation of youth, work toward the ripe production of wealthy age. Winckelmann contributed to *Wilhelm Meister;* and the truth of many a description of nature may be traced to the crayon or the brush. The sketches of a poet are studies for poems. The eye acquires a new insight, and the memory a new retentiveness for form and colour, when the habit has been formed of long gazing on a landscape, while asking, How shall I preserve that gleam? how produce that blue? by what touches shall I indicate that particular foliage?

After an interval of ill-health, beguiled by some religious thoughts and theosophic studies, we find Goethe, in the spring of 1770, standing on the platform of Strasburg Minster, exultant in recovered health, joyous in escape from Frankfurt, which seems duller now than ever, inhaling the April breezes and watching the flying April clouds, as they shadow the Rhine valley, and as the many branching streams, each embracing its green island, sparkle or darken underneath. At Strasburg he still corresponds with the pious Fraülein von Klettenberg, and continues his mystical studies. He goes to communion, associates with religious people, and scruples to play at whist. But the scruple passes away, and pietism cannot retain him. He finds anatomical lectures more interesting than law, and pursues science with an avidity grievous to his father. He learns to dance and to play the violoncello; he rides and fences; he studies the Minster; he quaffs bumpers of Rhine wine on glorious summer

eves; reads Moses Mendelssohn and Plato; and forms acquaintance with Herder.

And here the nature of Goethe's friendships should be noticed, as illustrating his character. His temperament was such that he shrank instinctively from perplexing questions, gloomy thoughts, scenes of unnatural excitement. It was the habit of his mother—the cheerful, sunny Frau Aja—to dispatch disagreeable duties as quickly as possible, and to receive disagreeable intelligence as late as possible. The characteristic had descended to her son. But from companionships the most opposite and seemingly uncongenial, Goethe felt no disposition to shrink. He had nothing of that unsocial reserve which naturally flies to solitude. He had nothing of that timidity or that narrowness which can only feel in safety or at home with natures in nearly all respects similar. He was too genial for the numerical isolation of the one class; too robust for the intellectual isolation of the other. That manly liberality of the youth, which found a point of interest in natures most unlike or even antipathetic to his own, became in after years the serene optimism of the sage. Let each individuality have its place, he would say: let the friend enjoy in his friend, not that which he has, but that which he has not. He rejoices in associates like headlong Behrisch and fantastic Lenz. He is strongly interested in the devout and sentimental Stilling. He associates with the radical and scoffing theorist Basedow—the dirtiest of smoke-dried pedagogues. He is familiar with the pious, science-loving Lavater—neatest of mortals. It is as though a man should be friends with Cobbett and Wilberforce at the same time. He derives a stimulus toward production alike from the comprehensive mind of the poetical Herder, and from the acute mind of the critical Merck. The friend who spouts Macpherson's *Ossian* by moonlight claims one part of Goethe; another part is assigned to the friend with whom he first enjoys the *Vicar of Wakefield* and the *Deserted Village*. One of his associates affects in his talk the manner of Shakespeare's fools; another is a prim classicist, who admires everything French, and

worships the Unities. The man and the artist are in fact inseparable. The benefits of such social and æsthetic catholicity, perfectly compatible as it is with the retention of a man's own individuality, are too obvious to need illustration. Goethe was manysided in his works, simply because he was manysided in his sympathies.

Schaefer appears to us quite right in thinking that Goethe has scarcely done justice in his Autobiography to the influence of his friend Merck—that accomplished critic and practical man of business. Goethe wrote when he was himself another man, and with recollections coloured by the fact, that within twenty years from the old times when they had worked together on the *Frankfurter Gelehrten Anzeigen*, the intellect of Merck had been overcast, and he perished by his own hand. The influence exerted by Merck was the complement of that exercised by Herder, and both were in these days of great service to Goethe. Herder was frequently dogmatical and bitter; for his fervid nature knew nothing of Goethe's tolerance. Merck was frequently cynical and sarcastic; for his tastes were refined, and his sense of the ludicrous exquisite. Merck, less self-inclosed than his friend Herder, was the first to discover the greatness of Goethe. Herder loved to extol the poetry of the people at the expense of the poetry of art. He revived a taste for the song which sprang from the heart of the nation, whether in ancient Judæa, in mediæval Germany, or in the merry England of the olden time. He possessed all that interest which Goethe lacked for the great movements of history, for the utterance and for the fate of the masses of mankind. His impetuous rhetoric belonged entirely to the *Storm and Stress* period of German literature. In the case of Goethe, he poured oil on that romantic fire which Merck could only tolerate. Herder's sarcasm was aimed at conventionalism, at critical canons, at the tame proprieties of mediocrity. Merck was inclined to quiz the young poets of the tempestuous school, so audaciously defiant of the past. Herder kindled the ambition of Goethe, but Merck invited his confidence. The ideas of Herder may be said to have effloresced in *Götz von Berlichingen*. But

to Merck only was the manuscript shown, with Merck the young dramatist took counsel, and it was Merck who advised its immediate publication. The student years of Goethe are concluded by a well-known episode — the most touching in his story — his love for Frederika. The lovely and simple-hearted daughter of a village pastor could enchain but for a season the restless ambition of a youth who belonged to another sphere. Goethe felt, when he bade her farewell, that he was forsaking her. He does not defend himself. Mr. Lewes, wiser than some of his admirers, does not defend him either. It may be true that the sense of honour which exacts the performance of a pledge to which the heart gives no fulfilment is a very mistaken one. Such a marriage keeps the word of promise to the world; but breaks it—where alone it is of worth—at the fireside. It sacrifices the spirit to the letter. Wretched must be the union which, begun by a spasm of self-sacrifice, collapses in a lasting sense of wrong. The greater then should be the care and forethought exercised in the first formation of engagements. Yet how vainly does grey wisdom preach to joyous youth, hungering after love, surrounded by the facilities and the incitements of life's springtime!

Returning to Frankfurt, Goethe found his brain in a ferment, from his passionate admiration for Shakespeare: his heart in sorrow, from remorseful memories of Frederika. He adopted at that time the course which he followed all through life. He relieved both heart and brain by literary production. He wrote *Götz von Berlichingen*, toiling hard, correcting often, finding—like all true workmen—the work itself his choice delight. He drew from his own experience. He represented the stormy strength of his own youth in Götz, and the weakness of that youth in Weislingen. One of his friends was represented both by character and name in the gallant Lerse. In Wetzlar, Goethe became practically acquainted with the 'law's delay' and the law's corruption.. Nothing more was necessary to enable him with all his soul to admire, portray, and justify that iron-handed knight, whose warrant was the sword, whose law-book, chivalry. The first draught of *Götz* was written, it is true,

in 1771, and Goethe did not visit Wetzlar till the following year; but the *Götz* which appeared in 1773 shows plainly that there had been times when the wild fist-law of the sixteenth century appeared to him a more equitable settlement of disputes than the false and ruinous 'justice' of the eighteenth.

Great and instantaneous was the success of *Götz* with the public, though small the profit to the author. That play broke the last fetters of literary conventionalism. Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen* and Lessing's *Emilia Galotti* were the pillars of Hercules out of which the daring genius of the *Storm and Stress*—the pride of young Germany—was to sail forth upon an untried sea. Goethe professed to reanimate the old conflict which had been carried on in the age of the Reformation. The ancient forms are visible—the scenery, the plumes, the cognizances, of vanishing chivalry. The clash of arms is heard, and the tumultuous dissolution of the feudal time. But the fire and fury of the strife were derived from the similar struggle then raging about him. *Götz* fights the battle of heroic individualism against decayed prescription. Hence the loud acclaim which greeted its appearance. The spirit, and not the form only, was in harmony with the time. It was not merely that Lessing had taught the nation to break away from the literary despotism of France; not merely that the genius of Shakespeare and the literature of England inflamed the young enthusiasm of the day. Frederick the Great had crushed, with buffalo tramp, through the routine of courts and armies. Multitudes were feeling still as the boy Goethe had felt. To the wrongs of Maria Theresa they never gave a thought. The cause of that bloody war was as nothing. But the *man* they admired—that impersonation of indomitable will, that tyrant-anarch, that portentous giant—sprung out of the Prussian sands, who had shaken, as with Briarean hands, the Olympian thrones of Europe. The American Revolution, too, had kindled an unlooked-for beacon in the West. The theories of Rousseau were awakening strange thoughts in France. Everywhere revolutionary speculation seemed about to pass over into action;

and each sign of action generated its progeny of sanguine speculation. The spirit of the time was itself a prologue to *Götz;* for the struggle and the hope of its hero represented the battle of Liberty with Tradition, and gave a voice to the confidence of the Present in its revolt from the Past.

Götz von Berlichingen was succeeded, within little more than a year, by a work destined to a still wider renown, *The Sorrows of Werther*. That period in the literary history of Germany, called, for want of a better name, the *Storm and Stress* time, contains two elements. It is a strange compound of strength and weakness. There is a high-souled, strong-handed protest against a corrupt age, which is proper to the manly nature. There is a querulous and heartsick discontent with every form of hindrance or limitation, which is the weakness of the effeminate. The former thunders in *Götz;* the latter weeps in *Werther;* for must not every thunder-cloud have its rain-droppings? Werther is the phantom reflexion of the armed warrior Götz. The stout old German hero dies sword in hand in a battle with circumstance; and is a victor in his very fall. The tearful youth who makes his moan in *Werther*, can neither fight with courage nor yield with dignity. He fills the air with his melodious plaint, and sadly sings how heaven and earth have joined to beset his path with obstacles,—in shape of straws. One act of self-denial, one vigorous resolve, and the adversities which mar, had made him. But with a nature so distempered, mere desire is mistaken for power, mere fretfulness for the sublime unrest of a genius too refined for the coarse jostling of this everyday life. This valetudinarian soul is always imagining what it would have been in some position of impossible indulgence, some state wherein existence would have known no *vis inertiæ*, no barrier, no strife; wherein even art should have been without a canon, and beauty without a law. At this period, then, society and literature were uttering a twofold complaint, a complaint against grievances which were imposed from without; and a complaint against grievances which were in reality evolved from within. The murmurs of the

latter were a faltering echo from the trumpet-tones of the former. Sentimentality is heroism with the reverse side outwards; its form and colour faded, confused, distorted. The character of Götz is cast in the iron of Goethe's own nature; the character of Werther is moulded in its wax. Götz is an ideal of Goethe as he was when the strength of his youth asserted itself. Werther is an image of Goethe as he might have been had the weakness of his youth been more indulged.

In Wetzlar, Goethe first saw Lotte, the original of Werther's Charlotte. To her belonged the three gifts which Chaucer celebrates in woman, 'sweet Thought, sweet Speech, sweet Looking.' To Goethe belonged a heart in which tender regret for an old affection served only to enhance the attractions of a new. Lotte was beloved by Kestner, and returned his affection. Kestner and Goethe were friends. Yet Goethe beheld Lotte and loved. Strong as the temptation appears to have been, the principle of Goethe was reinforced by powerful auxiliaries. Neither the vanity of the coquette nor the vanity of the prude could find a lodgment in the true heart of Lotte. She was as wise as she was winning. Her lover, Kestner, too, was not only a friend, but the most magnanimous of friends. Some men are too proud for jealousy. The modest Kestner acknowledged at once the superior fascination exercised by Goethe. Yet no hint of suspicion betrayed a doubt of his betrothed or of his friend. Merck, too, was at hand, a sagacious pilot, to warn Goethe of his danger. Here, verily, were three guardian angels; and Goethe's better self prevailed. He fled from Wetzlar.

Not long after his return to Frankfurt, he received from Kestner a letter, relating an occurrence which had thrown Wetzlar into great agitation. A melancholy youth, named Jerusalem, who had quarrelled with his employer, and loved his employer's wife, had borrowed a pair of pistols, shut himself up, and blown out his brains. So miserably did the sentimentalist cut that knot which Goethe had just untied by timely flight. Here, then, were the materials of

that tragic tale which Goethe wrote, in a few secluded busy weeks, at Frankfurt. It is easy to understand how Goethe found solace and pleasure in representing a nature tossed and overwhelmed by those waves from which he himself had just escaped safe to land. To portray the strength of such a passion was to present to himself an excuse for having entertained it, even for a season. To give utterance to the hysterical fervours of Werther was to part with the last remnant of his weakness in the act of giving it expression.

The author of the *Gerusalemme Liberata* makes Rinaldo cross a stream by a magic bridge of gold. The knight is no sooner on the other side than the bridge breaks up and drops into the water, while the stream becomes a raging torrent, precluding all retreat. The composition of *Werther* served a like temporary purpose, and carried Goethe out of a country to which he never returned. In his old age, he declared to Eckermann that he had read the book but once since its appearance, and had taken good care not to read it again. It was a mass of Congreve rockets, he said. He felt uncomfortable when he looked at it, and dreaded lest he should experience once more the peculiar state from which it was produced. Throughout his life it was the habit of Goethe to relieve his mind of oppression or excitement by literary effort. The fervours of sentimentalism evaporated in *Werther*. The influence of Shakespeare was liberated through the safety-valve of *Götz*. By the production of that play and *Egmont*, all danger of undue bias from the great Englishman was finally escaped. The uneasy reminiscence of so much time lost at Weimar, was removed in Italy by the composition of his *Tasso*. The smart of criticism he would assuage by an epigram. The retaliating rhymes lay unheeded in some drawer; they had drawn out the sting, and restored him his serenity. He used to say, that could Byron only have vented his vexation in Parliament, his poetry would have lost half its gloom and bitterness. Many of those morbid, sarcastic poems he proposed to call 'suppressed parliamentary speeches.' There was insight, as well as wit, in the remark. How

much good English indignation is dissipated by a few weeks' grumble.

Goethe did not attribute the astonishing success of *Werther* to the peculiar susceptibility of the crisis during which it appeared. Such an expression of discontent and weariness was sure, he thought, to find an echo in multitudes of youthful hearts at any time. It belonged not to a period in the culture of the nation, so much as to a period in the life of every individual. Every personal history has its epoch, wherein the first discord between the ideal and the actual is felt with peculiar keenness—perhaps bewailed in lugubrious verse. A woful tale, like that of *Werther*, is at once the aliment and element of these imaginary sorrows. Poor Prince Arthur, in his prison, suffering a real distress, could remember how, in France, 'young gentlemen would be as sad as night, for very wantonness.' How certain, then, was *Werther* to find hundreds of readers, to each of whom it seemed written for him or her alone. How much more so in a country like Germany, where 'the luxury of woe' may be said to rank among the national entertainments. The young people at Weimar were never better pleased with the management of the theatre than when they had enjoyed 'a good cry' over a tragedy by Kotzebue. To the constant vein of sentimentality in the German public may be attributed the difference in the effects produced by *Götz* and by *Werther* on the literature of the day. *Götz* became the first of a number of similar efforts; but *Werther* did not, in the same way, multiply reflections of itself. Goethe's play was the parent of many a terrible and stormy drama. Goethe's novelette did not found a school of sentimental tales. The former imparted an impetus to action; the latter was accepted as a consummate expression of feeling. In giving utterance to Werther's sorrows, sentimentalism had said its utmost. The book became a lovers' manual—the unrivalled and perpetual classic of sick hearts—the authorized repertory of language for fantastic passion. It was solemnly denounced; it was mercilessly caricatured; it was pirated, travestied, vulgarized; it was recast, it was continued, it was dra-

matized by many hands, but it stood alone—a climax, not a starting-point.

And now, passing over an interval of minor significance, we come to Goethe's court-life in Weimar—that German Athens, whither he repaired, at six-and-twenty, to become the friend and counsellor of its generous prince. Very interesting is the picture given by Mr. Lewes of the state of society in that little Duchy of Saxe-Weimar, whose capital has been described as a city with ten thousand poets, and a few inhabitants. It is but too true that Goethe and Schiller found at Weimar a circle, but not a public. Yet in Germany, and in the middle of the eighteenth century, it could scarcely be otherwise. Germany is still far from that well-knit nationality which would make the 'Fatherland' a reality and a power. In those old-fashioned days of strong prejudices and slow communications, the disintegration of the country was far more complete. The most civilized parts of Germany were a century behind England in all the convenient and comfortable appliances of life. Hear the following account:—

'The absence of comfort and luxury (luxury as distinguished from ornament) may be gathered from the memoirs of the time, and from such works as Bertuch's *Mode Journal*. Such necessities as good locks, doors that shut, drawers opening easily, tolerable knives, carts on springs, or beds fit for a Christian of any other than the 'German persuasion,' are still rarities in Thuringia; but in those days, when sewers were undreamed of, and a post-office was a chimera, all that we moderns consider comfort was necessarily fabulous. The furniture, even of palaces, was extremely simple. In the houses of wealthy bourgeois, chairs and tables were of common fir; not until the close of the eighteenth century did mahogany make its appearance. Looking-glasses followed. The chairs were covered with a coarse green cloth: the tables likewise; and carpets are only now beginning to loom upon the national mind as a possible luxury. The windows were hung with woollen curtains, when the extravagance of curtains was ventured on. Easy chairs were unknown; the

only arm-chair allowed was the so-called *grandfather's chair*, which was reserved for the dignity of grey-hairs, or the feebleness of age.

'The *salon de réception*, or drawing-room, into which greatly honoured visitors were shown, had, of course, a kind of Sunday splendour not dimmed by week-day familiarity. There hung the curtains; the walls were adorned with family portraits, or some work of extremely 'native talent;' the tables alluring the eye with china, in guise of cups, vases, impossible shepherds, and very allegorical dogs. Into this room the honoured visitor was ushered; and then, no matter what the hour, he was handed refreshment of some kind. This custom—a compound product of hospitality and bad inns—lingered until lately in England, and perhaps is still not unknown in provincial towns.

'On eating and drinking was spent the surplus now devoted to finery. No one then, except gentlemen of the first water, boasted of a gold snuff-box: even a gold-headed cane was an unusual elegance. The dandy contented himself with a silver watch. The fine lady blazoned herself with a gold watch and heavy chain, but it was an heirloom! To see a modern dinner service, glittering with silver, glass, and china, and to think that even the nobility in those days ate off pewter, is enough to make the lapse of time very vivid to us. A silver teapot and teatray were held as princely magnificence.

'The manners were rough and simple. The journeymen ate at the same table with their masters, and joined in the coarse jokes which then passed for hilarity. Filial obedience was rigidly enforced, the stick or strap not unfrequently aiding parental authority. Even the brothers exercised an almost paternal authority over their sisters. Indeed, the 'position of women' was by no means such as our women can conceive with patience; not only were they kept under the paternal, marital, and fraternal yoke, but society limited their actions by its prejudices still more than it does now. No woman, for instance, of the better class of citizens could go out alone; the servant girl followed her to church, to a shop, or even to the promenade.

'The coarseness of language may be gathered from our own literature of that period. The roughness of manners is shown by such a scene as that in *Wilhelm Meister*, where the Fair Saint, in her confessions (speaking of high, well-born society), narrates how, at an evening party, forfeits were introduced; one of these forfeits is, that a gentleman shall say something gallant to every lady present. He whispers in the ear of a lady, who boxes his ears, and boxes it with such violence that the powder from his hair flies into the Fair Saint's eyes; when she is enabled to see again, it is to see that the husband of the lady has drawn his sword, and stabbed the offender, and that a duel, in the very presence of these women, is only prevented by one of the combatants being dragged from the room.

'The foregoing survey would be incomplete without some notice of the *prices* of things, the more so as we shall learn hereafter that the pension Karl August gave Schiller was 200 thalers—about 60*l.* of our money—and that the salary Goethe received, as councillor of legation, was only 1200 thalers—about 200*l.* per annum. On reading this, Mr. Smith jingles the loose silver in his pockets, and with that superb British pride, redolent of Consols, which makes the family of Smith so accurate a judge of all social positions, exclaims, 'These beggarly Germans! I give my head clerk twice the sum.' Without, however, wishing to mitigate Mr. Smith's just contempt, it is necessary I should establish something like the real relation of this sum to the expenses of living. Thus we find in Schiller's correspondence with Körner, that he hires a riding-horse for sixpence a-day (vol. i. p. 84), and gets a manuscript fairly copied at the rate of threehalfpence a-sheet of sixteen pages (vol. i. p. 92); with us the charge is twopence for every seventy-two words. The whole of *Don Carlos* cost but three and sixpence for copying. He hires a furnished apartment, consisting of two rooms and a bed-room, for two pounds twelve and sixpence a quarter (Charlotte von Kalb, writing to Jean Paul, Nov. 1796, says his lodgings will only cost him ten dollars, or thirty shillings a quarter); while his male servant, who, in case of need, can act as secretary, is to be had

for eighteen shillings a quarter (vol. i. p. 111). Reckoning up his expenses, he says, 'Washing, servants, the barber, and such things, all paid quarterly, and none exceeding six shillings; so that, speaking in round numbers, I shall hardly need more than four hundred and fifty dollars' (vol. ii. p. 94); that is, about 70*l.* a-year. Even when he is married, and sees a family growing round him, he says, 'With eight hundred dollars I can live here in Jena charmingly—*recht artig.*'' (vol. ii. p. 153).—Vol. i. pp. 320—323.

The early years at Weimar were abandoned to the jovial lawlessness which was then accounted the prerogative of genius. Duke Karl August was a young sovereign heartily desirous of benefiting the subjects of his little principality. He was clear-headed yet headstrong, original, adventurous, fond of break-neck chases, disguises, practical jokes, mad freaks, shocking to court etiquette. Young Goethe was as wild as he, and countless were their extravagances, eating, drinking, love-making, and befooling. Yet when business must be done, the madcaps could grow sober on the instant, and despatch it with a promptitude and skill at which Humdrum held up wondering hands. At Weimar, Goethe forgot his short-lived love for Lili in a new passion for the Frau von Stein, the wife of the Master of the Horse, a beautiful woman of three-and-thirty, the mother of seven children. So low were the morals of that petty court, that no one was scandalized by this amour. The higher circles of German society had caught all the immorality while attaining none of the elegance which distinguished the Parisian models. What they wanted in wit they made up in sentimentality.

During this period Goethe's muse produced nothing of importance. Scanty, indeed, must have been the time reserved for his art, what with 'boar-hunting in the light of early dawn, sitting in the middle of the day in grave diplomacy and active council, rehearsing during the afternoon, and enlivening the evening with grotesque serenades or torch-light sledgings'—to say nothing of balls, masquerades, private theatricals, and concerts. It cost Goethe no-

thing to throw himself headlong into this whirl of brilliant trivialities. He never felt for a moment that he was sacrificing his genius to the frivolities of a court. Having chosen such a position, it would have been foolish to quarrel with its conditions. To nourish in seclusion 'a youth sublime,' elaborating in poverty some mighty poem, would have been intolerable to Goethe. He cherished no large designs for some creation yet unborn, which should eclipse his early efforts. That time was precious, and that he was wasting it, was not a thought likely to occur to him—at least, until mere satiety brought on reflection. He enjoyed the Weimar life, and he persuaded himself that this dissipation was a part of his culture. In his personal habits he was neither luxurious nor self-indulgent; but he entertained no views concerning art which rendered it imperative 'to scorn delights and live laborious days.' His estimate of literary occupation somewhat resembles that of Sir Walter Scott. In his eyes the enjoyments and even the fame of literary effort were objects altogether secondary as compared with social status, with the enjoyment of nature, and the healthy sports of the field. It was not in Goethe's nature to become pre-eminently the man of books. To be shut up to write for bread, would have been for him a doom as melancholy as poor Scott at last found it. Some men must work with weary assiduity for years to produce a slight impression, to add a mite to the knowledge or the good among their fellows. Others labour for a few weeks, and have achieved a reputation. A few felicitous strokes have laid the foundation of a growing fame, and won a place in history. On the gifted Goethe the obligation of painful toil was not laid; and as far as his enjoyments were innocent, he is not to be blamed for preferring, as a young man, the pleasures afforded by his position to the exhausting labours of the study. Those who can taste largely life's delights, while accomplishing a memorable work, are surely at liberty to do so. Let only such joys be stingless. In these days of grinding competition, we see too exclusively the severest side of life. We are too eager in acquisition to find time for enjoyment. The return

for labour which has been forced beyond the demands of duty is often too dearly bought, even if it amount to fame. But when such austere servitude realizes but a brief or uncertain reputation it becomes a folly, for peace of mind might have been ours without it. We may call such a mistake the infirmity of noble minds; but it is a very great mistake, notwithstanding.

The temperament of Goethe was too restless for protracted labour on a single subject. The disadvantages attendant on the production of a great work—the task of years—he clearly saw; and doubted whether the harvest was worth the tedious seed-time. Such an undertaking demanded tranquil days, remote from all disturbance. Has not the present, he would ask, its claims? Are not those poetic utterances commonly the best which express the feeling of the hour? But he who is absorbed in some great artistic project is apt to check those natural emotions, and sacrifices the pleasantness of life to his one purpose. His burden oppresses him. His thoughts receive an unnatural bias,—like the trees upon some bleak seaboard, they all lean from the quarter whence blows the prevailing wind, and delicate flowers sicken or die. Few are so various in their mastery as to succeed equally in every portion of a long poem. But a single gift may achieve perfection in an occasional piece. And a consummate song or ballad is better than a halting epic. In a lyric, plan and music are evolved together. In a long poem, the plan must be elaborately laid before a line is written. For a great fault in construction, nothing can compensate. And this is the toil of all others least seen, least estimated, and most arduous. Much of Goethe's cheerfulness was owing to his rejection of any load so heavy. He did not press, blind and eager, through a joyless present to the far-off bliss of completion. He was free to take enjoyment as it came, and to express it as the moment prompted. Pursuits so various and efforts so fragmentary might always be made to harmonize with the changeful moods of the mind, or with the uncertain humours of the body. His frame was never vexed by the tyranny of an inexorable resolve. Always doing something, he was seldom

doing one thing long; and so filled with his activity the ample span of fourscore years.

But even to Goethe, and to Goethe in the heyday of his youth, such giddy-paced times as those first years at Weimar must ere long bring grave disquietude. We discern accordingly, in 1779, the commencement of a change. As he enters on his thirtieth year we find him rising toward a more earnest view of life and its responsibilities. 'God help me further,' he writes, 'and give me light, that I may not so much stand in my own way, but see to do from morning till evening the work which lies before me, and obtain a clear conception of the order of things; that I be not as those are who spend the day in complaining of the headache, and the night in drinking the wine which gives the headache!' He devotes himself manfully to new official duties, having accepted the direction of the war department, when military preparations were active throughout the Saxon states. He resolves to attain self-mastery, and is encouraged in feeling that his efforts are not in vain. Science begins to attract him anew. He draws, and studies mineralogy and anatomy, during such intervals as he can snatch. He becomes more observant of decorum in his relations with the genial and boisterous Karl August. Their friendship is close as ever; but Goethe becomes now and then a plain spoken, though loving and respectful Mentor. He begins to feel that he is destined by nature to be an author, and nothing else. A momentous discovery for a temperament so versatile and so susceptible. He finds his own *Werther* a moonstruck fantasy. Gothic art recedes from his sympathies. The majestic and severe repose of the Grecian models begins to command that admiration which is to determine the ideal of his maturity. His spirit yearns toward Italy, and while yet afar off he celebrates in song the land of the cypress and myrtle. He at once sums up, and bids adieu to, the period of his early youth, by a visit to Frederika and a visit to Lili. The latter he found a happy wife, with a baby in her arms. The former (worth a score of Frau von Steins) had recovered the anguish which his desertion caused

her. But she had refused every other offer. The heart that has once loved Goethe, she would say, can belong to no one else. Frederika and her parents received him in the most delicate and generous manner. He need not have feared any attempt to revive his long extinguished passion. To be welcomed as though he had brought no sorrow into that quiet household, to be made to feel as though he had but returned to some old friends after an absence of six months, was an inexpressible relief. He was but too willing to be deceived by that noble self-control. It would have said more for him had that reception cut him to the heart.

The literary product of these years of growing seriousness was principally prose. He wrote his prose *Iphigenia*, and began *Wilhelm Meister*. Prose was then in vogue, and verse accounted artificial. Schiller's first plays were all in prose, and in prose *Götz* had done its stirring work. It would be difficult to produce a single respectable argument in favour of this preference. Still less defensible is the practice, then so frequent, of turning into blank verse dramas originally written in prose. Those who can sing, sing best at once, when thought and melody are born together. To choose rather to versify prose than to write verse in the first instance, is to prefer the workmanship of the gilder to the solid ore. The mechanism of such a process will betray itself in spite of the facility with which ordinary speech falls into iambics. For poetic diction, rhythm and rhyme do not alone constitute the difference between prose and poetry. These two modes of expression are vehicles for two different kinds of thought. In some departments of the poetic art, verse may merely superadd a grace of form. But the higher utterances of poetry are beyond the due limitations of prose. The mind labouring with thoughts inadmissible to prose, takes refuge in the larger licence of verse. Combinations so subtle or so daring that prose would seem intoxicated were it charged with them, are beauties, not extravagances, in the domain of poetry. In these two spheres, thoughts are accepted and rejected by a very different standard. Prose is a sober, thrifty householder, who refuses ad-

mittance to those gorgeous and princely revellers, whose splendour and whose excess would fill his house with riot. Poetry is queen of an enchanted garden, whither Goodman Prose cannot win access, lacking the royal bearing and the shining raiment of its denizens. To take an instance: suppose that a prose writer should address the west wind somewhat as follows:—'O wild west wind, who bearest loose clouds shed upon thee in the vexed heights of the air —as on earth decaying leaves are shed upon a stream; who bearest them—those children of sky and water, shaken from the intermingled branching of the heavens and the ocean—those clouds that fly as the angels of rain and lightning; I see them spread on the blue surface of thine aerial surge, like the bright hair lifted up from the head of some fierce Mænad, streaming from the dim verge of the horizon to the height of the zenith, and I imagine them the locks of the approaching storm,' &c. Now here not a word is used, nor a construction, which may not be found in ordinary prose. Yet how tumid, how fantastic, how insane would appear such a passage in prose composition! Because thoughts like these belong to poetry proper, and prose would burst and fly to tatters with them. Such ideas occur to no man while writing prose; but the very act of writing poetry summons them and their kindred in multitudes about the mind which is eminently rich in the poetic faculty. Transport these 'thick-coming fancies' to their proper clime—restore them to their place in Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*, and we admire what otherwise a correct taste would assuredly have cancelled:—

> 'Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
> Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
> Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,
> Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
> On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
> Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
> Of some fierce Mænad, even from the dim verge
> Of the horizon to the zenith's height
> The locks of the approaching storm.'

Let, then, these two provinces be kept distinct. Prose in poetry is a copy of the Parthenon built in red brick; poetry in prose is a counting-house built of sunset clouds. It is true that the tendency of our modern prose has been to approach the exaltation of poetry. Nor is that tendency to be regretted. For in the advance thus made, prose is not in reality trenching on the domain of poetry; it is but occupying a portion of its own soil which had, for nearly a century, lain waste. The influence of French literature encumbered with dignity the prose of the eighteenth century, while narrowing its sphere. That wealth of imagination or of wit which shines in the prose of Jeremy Taylor, of Henry More, of Thomas Fuller, of Thomas Brown, of Milton's *Areopagitica*, would be condemned as a fantastical or barbaric quaintness by the prose of Shaftesbury, of Gibbon, or of Hume. A return toward the copiousness and the daring of our earlier writers was a return to nature. It was to bring out the full power of the great prose instrument, and to make use of those stops which the French school had never touched. Then again, as culture has extended, the demands made upon the poet have been more rigorous. Sixty years ago, Dickens and Ruskin might have taken enviable rank among the poets of the day. The large poetical element of their nature now finds sufficient scope in prose, and leaves poetry proper to Tennyson. Yet poetical as our prose is growing, the distinction between it and poetry is in nowise removed. Prose becomes poetical in order to give vividness to a description, expansion to a thought, form and colour to an abstraction, fire to an argument,—always with some practical purpose. The most musical rhetoric still falls short of singing. The most gorgeous passages in Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution* were wrought out under quite other laws than those which presided at the creation of Shakespeare's *Queen Mab*. It is impossible to conceive of the conversations of Romeo and Juliet as ever written in prose. The German prose-mania was a great mistake—a mistake from which we have kept ourselves free. One such prose drama as Sheridan's *Pizarro* is quite enough for us.

Concerning Goethe's *Iphigenia*, Mr. Lewes rightly observes that in spirit it is anything but Greek, however classic in its form. He has indicated some of the main points of contrast between Goethe's drama and the play of Euripides on the same subject. He points out the higher moral tone of the modern piece as compared with the ancient. In the latter, Iphigenia does not hesitate to escape from Thoas by a falsehood, and to carry off the sacred image intrusted to her. In the former, her unwillingness to resort to deception brings on the most anxious crisis of the action. In Euripides, the unknown Orestes is almost as much endangered by the revengeful feelings of his sister as by the barbarous superstition of the Tauri. The Iphigenia in Goethe's drama has been for a long time successful in persuading Thoas and his people to remit their sacrifice of blood.

It appears to us that these secondary differences resolve themselves into a primary one. It is the design of Goethe to concentrate on Iphigenia the main interest of his play. With Euripides, the central figures are certainly Orestes and his friend. The German drama is really complete in itself; the Greek is an organic outgrowth from previous tragedy—the sequel of the crime and sorrow which had haunted for generations the doomed race of Tantalus. Goethe could not fail to perceive how susceptible of the most effective treatment was the situation of Iphigenia—a Grecian maiden, a captive priestess, a noble exile on the wintry shores of the Euxine. But to secure the interest of a modern audience, she must be endowed with an elevation of principle which we are prepared to admire. The tragic conflict must be within rather than without—from a conflict of motives rather than the mere aggression of circumstance. And such a design, altogether distinct from that of Euripides, Goethe has executed with consummate art. A counterpoise to the motives which urge Iphigenia to flee must be somewhere found, in order to give rise to the contemplated struggle. So Thoas is no longer, in Goethe's hands, the ruthless barbarian which the Greek dramatist depicted. He is neither the stormy

savage of Euripides, nor the sentimental savage of Rousseau. He is a Teutonic chieftain—a barbarian such as Tacitus portrayed, to shame degenerate Rome. He offers his hand to Iphigenia; he is even chivalrous in the respect he renders her. The most dramatic part in Goethe's play is its close, where she confesses all, and casts herself upon his generosity. The part least dramatic, though containing some of the finest lines, is the conversation between Orestes and Pylades. Of the Greek drama the converse is true. Euripides is most dramatic where the friends dispute, each eager to remain and die, and where the giving of the tablets leads to the discovery of Orestes. The final escape with the image is secured by a mere *deus ex machina.* At the same time we do not think, with Mr. Lewes, that the interest of the play, for Greeks, is at all defective in the latter part. The unity of the plan, indeed, is broken: but several of the great Grecian dramas are divided, in like manner, by a double object. The story of the statue of Serapis is a sufficient proof of the importance attached by the ancients to such sacrilegious achievements. To carry off a statue was to deprive another nation of the powers and the services of the gift of the divinity it represented. Many a pirate-hero in an Athenian audience would sooner have left the sister behind than the goddess.

In the slowness of its movement and the severity of its style Goethe's drama is certainly classical. It has more action than some of the Greek plays, but considerably less than others. The exaggerated ideas so prevalent concerning the *repose* of the Greek drama, are to be attributed, doubtless, in great measure to its lyrical origin, to the fact that it grew up from a chorus of singers, and that the actors, or declaimers rather, spoke in recitative. But the cause of this great contrast between the rapid development of the modern play, and the scanty or the tardy action of the ancient, is not to be found exclusively in that source. The Greeks were frequently satisfied with a single situation, developed in its various aspects by successive arrivals. Such a play is the *Prometheus Bound.* They were not averse to a monotonous repetition of the

same sentiments which would utterly exhaust our northern patience. Neither did they object to long descriptions, far more epic than dramatic in their character. The *Seven against Thebes* is an example of both faults—as we should term them. The description of the chiefs is altogether epic. The lamentations of the chorus when the main action is complete are inordinately protracted. The unity of plot is marred, moreover, by the addition of an entirely new interest, when Antigone resolves to bury her brother, despite the law. At the same time it should be borne in mind that many of the Greek plays, taken separately, appear much more meagre in action than they really are. Many of the ancient plays are to the trilogies in which they have their place, what a single act is to a drama of full five-act proportions. Thus the action of the *Suppliants* of Æschylus is very insignificant. Taken alone, it appears of worth only as the possible vehicle of some good music. But if we had the two lost plays which completed the trilogy, we could then form a truer judgment. The mere reception of the fugitive daughters of Danaus by Pelasgus is a poor theme for a tragedy. But let the *Egyptians* and the *Danaides* be added, and the piece which, standing alone, we deem a failure, would assume its beauty and significance as an introduction. We should then mark how the joy of the suppliants darkens into the purpose of a monstrous crime. We should be stricken by the terrors of that night when the fifty brides slew their fifty sleeping and new-wedded lords. We should admire the one noble exception,—that Hypermnestra, who stands forth fearless amidst the wrath, and unstained amidst the crime, of her remorseless house.

In 1786, Goethe was enabled to gratify his long-cherished desire. He quietly withdrew from Weimar, and travelled through Italy under an assumed name. Among the churches and picture-galleries of the south, his devotion to art acquired a deeper intensity. As northern art was hidden from his view, Goethe became that decided Hellenist in æsthetics which he ever afterward remained. Science, too, occupied him very often, when it was more natural to expect

that the associations of the past or the beauties of natural scenery would have absorbed every thought. Among the Baths of Caracalla, the vegetable physiology of the luxuriant verdure would interest him more than the crumbling ruins over which it grew. In Italy, *Egmont* was re-written. That play would have been the better had he finished it at once, under the influences which presided at its commencement. There is too much history, and too little invention. Egmont and Clärchen are portrayed with the hand of a master; but the introduction of Ferdinand is less happy, and almost all the rest is mere historic dialogue. The scenes are many of them unduly protracted, and the conversations overcharged with politics, while underfed with passion. For such a subject something more was requisite of that fervid *Sturm und Drang* enthusiasm, on which Goethe had now turned his back for ever.

Returning to Weimar, Goethe gradually dissolves the connection which had existed between himself and the Frau von Stein. She had become less attractive and more exacting. Soon afterwards he formed a *liaison* with Christiane Vulpius, a sprightly, golden-haired, rosy-cheeked country lass; sufficiently clever, though uneducated, to form a sympathising companion, content to reside with him for some years, and to present him with a son, untroubled by the absence of that important ceremony—the marriage service. The Weimar world, unscandalised by the Frau von Stein affair, was shocked at this *mésalliance*. Such were the ethics of the German Athens. Goethe is said to have offered her marriage, not very earnestly, perhaps. We cannot attribute to Christiane so surpassing a devotion as that of Heloise, who could say with perfect truth to Abelard, that did the Emperor offer her his throne, *Carius mihi et dignius videretur tua dici meretrix quam illius Imperatrix.* Yet Christiane was probably sensible that, in the Weimar world, no excess of selfish libertinism could have been so injurious to Goethe as a generous marriage. The *Roman Elegies* were produced under the influence of this new passion, and while the memory of classic Italy was yet fresh. It is enough to say that in the licence of

thought and expression, as well as in felicitous elegance of form, they are worthy of Ovid or Catullus. Such writing is utterly indefensible. It is idle to say, with Schiller, that the poet returns to an ideal state of nature, where the conventional reticence of society is unnecessary. On such a principle those eccentric young friends of Goethe's, the Stolbergs, might have justified themselves, in sober earnest, for going naked through the public streets to bathe. The conventional public, in shape of town-boys and others, pelted them with stones. Goethe would say, 'I do not sing for those who will make an ill-use of my verse.' The Stolbergs might have said, 'We do not undress for those who cannot appreciate our principle.' To the one we reply, If you must write such things, keep them in your desk: to the others, Indulge your predilection for the nude only in the presence of those happy few who are prepared to estimate it. But there are, in German criticism, refinements so dextrous, and spiritualisations of the material so subtle, that they would eliminate all impurity from Wycherley's *Country Wife*, and prove Congreve's *Way of the World* an indirect inculcation of the austerest virtue.

Tasso was commenced in 1777. Next to *Faust*, this appears to us the poem (among the greater works of Goethe) which must leave the deepest impression on the reader who, for the first time, peruses it in the original. It is not historic. Its atmosphere is that of Weimar rather than Ferrara. We do not believe that Tasso was at all insane. The suspicion which would have been morbid in a happier age was perfectly natural at the court of Alphonso. It is not dramatic. With the minimum of action, it represents the collision of two opposite types of mind. This drama depicts completely, and once for all, the contact of the two extremes of cultivated humanity. Each one of the two genera includes a host of species; and the strife between them is daily waging in a thousand ways. On the one side is the poetic nature, impulsive, romantic, idealist, intense alike in pain and pleasure, ever restless, striving to overcome the actual. On the other stands the practical man, cool and self-

possessed, sagacious in device, prompt in execution, cautious and utilitarian, oppressively well informed, trusting rather to routine than impulse, suppressing carefully the outbreak of every emotion. Though Goethe's picture is unfavourable to the man of poetic genius, as compared with the man of action, all our sympathies are with Tasso. If there is anywhere exaggeration, it is in the childish or sickly petulance of Tasso, and in the generosity and candour which half redeem the utilitarian coldness of Antonio. The Italian diplomatist is to Tasso what a Scotchman was to Charles Lamb—a being with whom (in his mild way of putting it) his sympathies were 'imperfect.' The inevitable misunderstanding is traced in its progress and in its consequences with exquisite skill, and in language which, for Goethe, is unusually rich in poetical adornment. The poem gives consummate expression to what multitudes have felt and observed, to what multitudes will continue to feel and observe. This is enough, even though at the same time we are all the while unable to believe in a Tasso quite so foolish, or an Antonio quite so benign. To have done justice to the real Tasso, Goethe must have drawn Ferrara as it was. To have drawn Ferrara as it was, might have been construed into a malignant design to draw Weimar as it certainly was not.

In 1790, Goethe was torn from Weimar, and those charming 'Friday Evenings' at the Duchess Amalia's, to follow Karl August to the wars. We cannot wonder that he felt no enthusiasm for the wretched cause which his country had espoused. We should not greatly blame that officer in the army or the fleet of Louis XIV., who entered with less than his usual alacrity on the execution of projects for the invasion of England, or for a campaign in Ireland, to restore our James II. In the camp, Goethe was occupied with the many scientific inquiries which new scenes suggested. It was no part of his vocation, either in that war or during the strife which succeeded, to write war-songs, or to produce political pamphlets. He was accustomed to say that he ought no more to be accused of criminal indifference in not forsaking his poetic art for the political,

than should a military man be blamed because he did not step aside from his art of war to become a bungler in the art of government. And Goethe being what he was, his resolve was wise. Yet we cannot but regard it as an intellectual, and even in some sort a moral defect, of no small magnitude, that he should have been at all times so destitute of sympathy for the great movements among the masses of mankind. How charitable and candid was he toward individuals! His purse was open, and his heart. The waywardness of distress could not chill his sympathy. On the caprices or ill-treatment of a friend he had ever some kindly construction to put. But wherever men are gathered in multitudes, this large-heartedness forsakes him. The historic imagination, which sees in bodies of men only multiplications of the group which surrounds us each personally, was wanting to Goethe's mind. Some grotesque and angular individuality he could bear with, beyond most. He would say it was well in its place. But an epoch, an event, a social outbreak,—to that he could not assign its allotted place, as an individual in a needed cycle of events. Revolutions he dreaded, as disturbing forces marring the harmony of nature, as hindrances to gradual development. But granting that an analogy drawn from nature to society in such cases is allowable; it must never be forgotten that the slow processes of organic development are not the only types of progress which surround us in the natural world. The realm of nature has its thunder-storms which clear the air, its volcanoes to relieve earth's bosom of its 'perilous stuff.' The present order of our globe, with its manifold and ever-developing wisdom and beauty, is founded on ruinous convulsion in the immemorial past. A great revolution does for awhile check peaceful literary and scientific culture. But if such movements hinder art in one generation, they prepare a public for it in another. If they arrest some forms of elegant development, they also arrest the progress of that servile corruption which proves at last as fatal to taste as it is to freedom. The artist, therefore, who sees only the present earthly side of such great times of change, only the tumult, only the folly, only the blood, is

wanting in some of the largest views of his art. He may faithfully pursue his own culture, he may refine and elevate the taste of his time—and this did Goethe—but he has failed to link art duly to humanity, and to associate it with the noblest destiny of man. The indifference of Goethe will surprise no one who remembers that he was so deplorably ignorant of the first principles of social philosophy as to maintain that political freedom was not necessary to man. He believed that art and commerce might flourish under a despotism, and such material prosperity appears to have satisfied him. He forgot that every epoch which has seen literature flourishing under a despotism has been the fruit of a better time which despotism has displaced. The Augustan age was the child of the commonwealth, not of the empire. The offspring of the latter is seen in that weakness which succumbed to invading barbarism. The Prussia of the present day would scarcely appear to him ignoble or oppressed. Hungary would have touched no chord of sympathy. Russia would have aroused no outburst of indignation. The poet may believe that he is not qualified to help a great cause by his art. But he is bound to feel as a citizen and a man. It may be true that we should not transfer to Germany our strong insular feeling of nationality. In divided Germany, a sentiment so powerful as that which animates united England can only be awakened for a moment by some extraordinary crisis. What is there in the continental governments to draw forth affection, far less to inspire self-sacrifice? Nowhere is cosmopolitanism so excusable as in a German. But Goethe would have disdained to plead this accident of birth. He justifies himself deliberately and on principle. He is convinced that every reasonable man should be satisfied with a paternal *régime* which, like that of Austria, allows its subjects to sing and to traffic, to play and to paint, but forbids the faintest approach to self-government. He believes that to serve the artistic culture of his age is a worthy and sufficient work for any man—that none should require of him more. The first proposition is wholly false; the second, partly false and partly true.

On his return to Weimar, Goethe received an agreeable surprise in the shape of a house which the Duke had ordered to be rebuilt for him during his absence. The spacious staircase he adorned with classic busts, and enriched the apartments with paintings on wall and ceiling, with sketches from Italian masters, with cabinets of engravings and gems, with vases, lamps, and statuettes of bronze. The rooms in daily use, when he was alone, were singularly plain. Mr. Lewes thus describes their present appearance:—

'But the sanctuary of the house is the study, library, and bedroom. In the rooms just described the visitor sees the tokens of Goethe's position as minister and lover of art. Compared with the Weimar standard of that day, these rooms were of palatial magnificence; but compared even with the Weimar standard, the rooms into which we now enter are of a more than bourgeois simplicity. Passing through an ante-chamber, where in cupboards stand his mineralogical collections, we enter the study, a low-roofed, narrow room, somewhat dark, for it is lighted only through two tiny windows, and furnished with a simplicity quite touching to behold. In the centre stands a plain oval table of unpolished oak. No arm-chair is to be seen, no sofa, nothing which speaks of ease. A plain hard chair has beside it the basket in which he used to place his handkerchief. Against the wall, on the right, is a long pear-tree table, with bookshelves, on which stand lexicons and manuals. Here hangs a pincushion, venerable in dust, with the visiting-cards, and other trifles which death has rendered sacred. Here, also, a medallion of Napoleon, with this circumscription: '*Scilicet immenso superest ex nomine multum.*' On the side-wall, again, a bookcase with some works of poets. On the wall to the left is a long desk of soft wood, at which he was wont to write. On it lie the original manuscripts of *Götz* and the *Elegies*, and a bust of Napoleon, in milk-white glass, which in the light shimmers with blue and flame colour; hence prized as an illustration of the *Farbenlehre*. A sheet of paper with notes of contemporary history is fastened near the door, and behind this door schematic tables of music and geology.

The same door leads into a bedroom, if bedroom it can be called, which no maid-of-all-work in England would accept without a murmur. It is a closet with a window. A simple bed, an arm-chair by its side, and a tiny washing-table with a small white bason on it and a sponge, is all the furniture. To enter this room with any feeling for the greatness and goodness of him who slept here, and who here slept his last sleep, brings tears into the eyes, and makes the breathing deep. From the other side of the study we enter the library; which should rather be called a lumber-room of books. Rough deal shelves hold the books, with bits of paper on which are written 'philosophy,' 'history,' 'poetry,' &c., to mark the classification.'—Vol. ii. p. 178.

In the year 1799, the generosity of Karl August enriched the Weimar circle with a new luminary—Friedrich Schiller. He and Goethe, unlike in so many respects, speedily became inseparable. The one link of their friendship was that sameness of pursuit, and that community of ambition, by which less noble natures are so frequently set at jealous variance. Their alliance was the more creditable to both, as the criticism of the day abounded in comparisons the most invidious. Together they directed the management of the Weimar theatre; together they laboured for the *Horen*, for the *Musenalmanach*, so rich in the finest lyrics of both; and together they lashed their adversaries in the pages of the latter with the epigrammatic scourge of the *Xenien*. To the wife of Schiller is due the praise of having contributed more than any other person to effect and cement a union so beneficial to the friends, and so serviceable to literature. For, during their daily intercourse, each unconsciously supplemented the nature of the other. Schiller began to turn with weariness from the philosophy of Kant. He overcame, in some measure, that reflective tendency, and that proneness to speculate upon art, which had withdrawn so much time from poetic production, and had darkened with obscurity so much of what he did produce. It was an auspicious hour for the genius of Schiller when Wilhelm von Humboldt left him, and when Goethe drew

near. He forsook those metaphysical Kantian rhymes—too obscurely allegoric for any human interest—and wrote popular ballads, like the *Cranes of Ibycus*, and the *Diver*. While philosophy was at one time so injurious to the poetry of Schiller, it was always characteristic of Goethe to work unconsciously, as from instinctive impulse. He would never analyse his processes; he refused to think about Thought. Their dissimilarity in this respect produced a singular result. It seemed to make them change characters. The reserved Schiller is communicative about his work, and will talk over scene after scene of a play with his friend. The more free and careless Goethe carries his plans about with him, and speaks of them to no one. Schiller was astonished when Goethe showed him his *Hermann* and *Dorothea* complete; for he had not breathed a syllable of any such undertaking.

Most truly said Madame de Stael of Schiller, 'His conscience was his muse;' so high and earnest was his purpose, so bent on teaching while he sang, on making the very stage a pulpit. Schiller energetically asserts the prerogative of Will. Goethe musingly surveys the harmony of Nature. Goethe's ideal is a combination of select realities—is sensuous. Schiller's ideal is an abstraction impossible in reality—is super-sensuous. Goethe could never fall a martyr to a theory. Kant's categorical imperative hastened the untimely end of Schiller. For to vindicate the supremacy of spirit, he forced his physical nature upon fatal labours. The Grand Duke had offered to double his income if he should be hindered from working by sickness. He declined the offer. 'I have talent,' said he, 'and must help myself.' But then two dramas must be composed annually, in addition to other engagements, if his family is to find support. So he forced himself to work when ill. Hence the necessity for stimulants. Hence, too, the inferiority of such a play as *Maria Stuart*, written in pain and late at night, when his broken frame should have courted sleep. Goethe worked in the mornings, and husbanded that costly thing emotion. Schiller, who lived in the region of the

ideal, was a man of large historic view, and strongly moved by the events of his day. Goethe, who lived in the actual, regarded the striving multitudes of men with a philosophic smile. For the outer world of Schiller was Humanity; the outer world of Goethe, Nature!

Schiller was of service to Goethe, in urging him to composition. In his own case, the productive power was greater than the receptive susceptibility. He worked from within outwards. Of Goethe, the reverse was true. The crowding impressions of the new Italian world were unfavourable, as we have seen, to poetic execution; for they seemed to block up with their numbers all the gates of utterance. Goethe had abundant material; he lacked only stimulus; while, for material, Schiller was frequently indebted to the affluent resources of his friend. Yet, while each was urging on the other to production, the creations of both are seen to exchange properties in the process. Schiller, who had been writing for the philosophic few of late, began to appeal once more to the many. Goethe, who touched the manifold outer life on so many points, began to withdraw into a narrower æsthetic circle. He became more ideal as Schiller became more real. He did not, indeed, betake himself to that Kantian philosophy from which he had recalled his friend, but he yielded more than ever to a kind of contemplative Quietism. When writing prose, he sought repose at the cost of animation, and introduced symbolism at the expense of interest. He elaborated trivial incidents to weariness, while endeavouring to render them the real or apparent vehicle of optimist philosophy and æsthetic spiritualism. The later books of *Wilhelm Meister* betray the symptoms of this unfavourable change. Every reader must find them disappointing, so much less life and colour have they, so much less nature, and so much more disquisition and speculation. Every work of art is, no doubt, variously suggestive to various minds of a deeper meaning than lies upon the surface. If such significance be designed by the author, and made to underlie the whole, no harm is done, so far.

But the story itself—the envelope—must be as full of truth and interest as though there were no such meaning. It is vain for any artist to urge profundity of inner sense as a set-off against an awkward plot, a feeble representation, or an unsatisfactory *dénouement*. In consequence of the change adverted to, it came to pass (as Gervinus justly observes) that the lofty and abstract Schiller grew more popular, while the direct and simpler Goethe became less comprehensible. The poet whose high aim sought *man* in his fullest development is the favourite of youth and the delight of women. The poet who retained in age all the sunny susceptibilities of youth is the companion of grown men, whose ideal has already suffered loss at the rough hand of actual experience. The richer poet began to fill a lesser circle, and the poorer expanded his influence throughout a broader and more varied sphere.

Goethe scrutinised nature with the man of science, and hence the accuracy of his delineation. He watched it lovingly with the man of taste, and hence the comprehensiveness and the judgment displayed in his descriptions. He had seen far more of nature than Schiller, and seen to better purpose every object within that wide range. Schiller makes nature speak his language; Goethe forgets himself that he may interpret hers. As a word-painter of landscape, the superiority of Goethe will be readily acknowledged. Yet the descriptive power of Schiller was in reality more rare and wonderful. His faculty in this respect is a remarkable instance of intellectual compensation. A strange felicity in what might be called *à priori* construction made amends for limited experience. From the scantiest materials, from the hint of a traveller, from a phrase in a book, he could develop the complete conception of a scene with such vividness and force, that it became difficult to believe he had never visited the spot. It is said that Gainsborough would sometimes paint landscapes suggested by bits of glass, stones, and moss heaped together—a medley miniature which his imagination enlarged, completed, and idealized. Some-

what analogous must have been the process in the mind of Schiller. Goethe told Eckermann that the localities of Switzerland, which Schiller has so finely employed in his *William Tell*, were all related to him by himself. Schiller had never visited Switzerland. 'But he possessed,' said Goethe, 'such a wonderful mind, that, even on hearsay, he could make something that possessed reality.' In reading Schiller's *Diver*, we recognise the presence of imagination of the highest order, when we remember that the description of the whirlpool in that ballad, where we seem to see the foam flung up out of the depths—where the very words rush, and chafe, and seethe, was written by a man who had never seen a waterfall.

The latter part of *Wilhelm Meister* was written, and the whole given to the public, during the period when Goethe and Schiller were labouring in concert. The beauties and the defects of this well-known novel, at once so admirable and so provoking, lie upon the surface. We cannot agree with those who regard its tendency as immoral. Its effect, as a whole, is to enlarge the sympathies and to gird the loins of action. Every mind in tolerable health will derive invigoration from its pages. It is no more immoral than *Macbeth* is immoral because Shakespeare does not pause to dilate on the guilt of murder. *Antony and Cleopatra* would not have been rendered more edifying had the poet reminded us continually that the Queen of Egypt would have been happier in a hut with the virtue she had not, than in a palace with the temperament she had, and that the triumvir was exceeding foolish to lose the world for so false a fair one.

In 1806 was published the first part of *Faust*, which had been growing from time to time in the mind of Goethe for some thirty years. Our limits do not allow us to enter on the merits of this great poem—this masterpiece of Goethe and of German literature—which German criticism can darken by clouds of speculative commentary, but can scarcely praise too highly. We commend to our readers the able chapter in which it is analyzed by Mr. Lewes, and compared with other noted dramas on the same theme. The criti-

cisms of Mr. Lewes on art are always interesting, for he refuses to dive down into depths of fathomless obscurity in search of the 'Idea,' and is content to enjoy the Beautiful for its own sake, without digging under it for the Abstract.

Most of our readers have heard the story of Goethe and Bettina. They may have read how the ardent and precocious girl displayed a fantastic passion for the old man; and how the calculating sage coquetted with the child, nourishing by sonnets and by compliments her folly,—that he might gather from her letters materials for his poems. The amatory sins of Goethe are sufficient, without the addition of scandal. The charitable will be glad to learn that the Bettina correspondence has been shown to be a 'romance, which has only borrowed from reality the time, place, and circumstances.' There is every reason to believe that instead of Goethe's turning her letters into poems, Bettina turned Goethe's poems into her letters.

Justice to Goethe also demands that due estimate be made of his marriage with Christiane Vulpius. In his fifty-eighth year (five days after the battle of Jena) they were wedded, after a connexion of fifteen years. Her beauty was gone; and much of what had constituted attraction of a more lasting kind. Always fond of gaiety, she had of late yielded to those habits of intemperance to which a father and a brother had fallen victims. Goethe sorrowed in secret; he forbore; he endured; he hoped against hope. In spite of all, the past endeared her; and he made her his wife. How easy had it been for a man utterly selfish and heartless (such as Goethe has been often represented) to have dismissed her to infamy, and accelerated her ruin! But her love, in Goethe's eyes, covered many sins; and he chose rather to suffer himself, than to inflict on her such suffering.

Allusion has been made to the political views of Goethe. We have seen that the calm judgment of such a man could not be proud of the position of his country as an Englishman is proud of England. To compare his own nation with other nations was to awaken painful feelings. In Art and Science—in a region beyond

all nationality—he found a refuge from such pain. Can the thoughtful Prussian of the present day experience any other feeling, or find any better resource? The return which the labours of Bunsen have met with, at the hands of those who rule his country, may well quench the last spark of enthusiasm.

But it is natural next to inquire how we should judge concerning a somewhat similar indifference as regards religious truth. Goethe and Schiller, Herder and Jean Paul, with most of the leading names in the literature of their time, occupy a middle ground between two theological extremes. The dreary ice-fields of Rationalism are too frigid for them; and as much too hot are the sentimental fervours of Romanticism. The pert materialist sciolism of men like Nicolai and Lichtenberg was of course intolerable to minds with too much common sense to ignore all mystery, and too much veneration to ridicule as fools all the bygone generations of mankind. Equally remote from their sympathies would be the capricious bigotry of Frederick Schlegel, and the crude fantasies of the sickly Novalis. But this religion of the temperate zone is not without its grave defects and curious inconsistencies. Schiller looked upon religion as a help to those meaner or more feeble minds which cannot rise to the higher region of disinterested virtue. Where virtue cannot be had, we are to put up with its substitute, religiousness. Goethe, a nature-worshipper, is inclined to regard a violation of natural law, in the shape of miracle, as a blasphemy against his goddess. Yet he acknowledges the genuineness of the Gospels, and believes that the morality there set forth can never be superseded. He would have been as much amazed as any of us at the folly of some recent teachers among ourselves, who appear afraid of having their morality degraded to the biblical standard. He was early brought into contact with some persons who were the subjects of ardent religious feeling. He could never have written the *Confessions of a Fair Saint*, but for his friendship with Fraülein von Klettenberg. That remarkable episode displays a familiarity with some of the more intense forms of devout experience, otherwise inexplicable. To the last, Goethe

retained his respect for such devotion in others. His most anti-christian expressions were called forth by those who, like Lavater, could not let him alone in his æsthetic heathendom.

It was in the ethics of Spinoza that Goethe found a welcome justification for that indifference to which he was naturally prone. There he learnt the comfortable (and ultimately materialist) doctrine that each person judges of things 'according to the disposition of his brain, or, rather, accepts the affections of his imagination as real things.' Even in his youthful days such doctrine was congenial to Goethe, and he believed a Daniel had come to judgment when Spinoza told him that good and evil, harmony and discord, were purely subjective—that they varied in every man with the disposition of the *cerebrum*. Far, indeed, are we from sharing in the admiration of Mr. Lewes for the frigid ingenuities of the mathematical moralist. One of Spinoza's propositions, which appeared to young Goethe very sublime, appears to us very absurd. It is this —'No man who loves God can possibly endeavour to obtain his love in return.' The good sense of Goethe prevented his using this dictum as Spinoza uses it. He applied it to disinterestedness in friendship, not to our relations with the Highest. This idea of doing without the love of the Supreme Being, is as arrogantly self-sufficient in spirit, as it is unphilosophical in principle. It ill becomes a creature who owes being, understanding, affection—all, to the bounty of God, to assume indifference to his regard, or to refuse to supplicate further bestowments,—too proud to be laid under further obligations to the Infinite. A man who has from the first been heaped with benefits—whose debt of obligation is past his power to calculate, affects disinterestedness as though he were self-originated, self-preserved,—the creator of some rival universe. Or, if it be not pride which affects the sublimity of an impossible virtue, a perverse irrationality alone can lay down such a proposition. For there can be no love on our part to God without love on his part to us. The veriest Deist will acknowledge that the divine goodness has been beforehand with him. We know what love means, only

because we are made in his image who is love. Gravitation is not more surely a law than the co-operation of infinite and finite in the elevation of the latter. Such an acquiescence as that Spinoza inculcates, is an acquiescence in the practical stultification of man's highest aspirations. If by this maxim he meant that a man ought not to test the efficacy of prayer by petitioning that he may win a lottery-ticket, it is a sorry truism. If it means more, it is a high-sounding folly.

Goethe fell early into the common mistake of regarding faith as a mere sentiment, independent of truth or falsehood. He opposed to faith, knowledge,—as though we could believe that of which we knew nothing. The mere fact of faith was enough for him: let a man only believe something or other, no matter what. And it is not difficult to see how the teaching of Spinoza should have landed his pupil in an absurdity so palpable. According to Goethe's guide, all the symbols, terms, propositions, &c., which men may use, fall so infinitely short of expressing the Infinite, that it makes little matter which of those intrinsically worthless counters a man takes up. Let one take a blue, another a red, a third a yellow,—none of them can derive from these bits of pasteboard, bone, or tinsel, a conception of the rainbow he has never seen. The varieties of positive religion are accordingly matters of circumstance merely,—of individual taste and choice. Hence the indifference of pantheism.

The fallacy which conducts to such a result is obvious. It is true that no finite sign adequately expresses the Infinite. But such signs are of two kinds. Some truly render a divine characteristic, on their smaller scale. These are relatively *true*. Others are not merely defective in compass, but also in proportion. They darken or distort what they profess to interpret. These are relatively *false*. There is, therefore, an objective religious truth for men. There are certain signs to be chosen, certain others to be shunned. The reverse of Goethe's assertion is the truth. The important point is *what* a man believes concerning God. The word 'father' is a faithful sign, as far as it goes. But the word 'tyrant' substitutes

an idol for the true God. Man does not need revelation to give him *a* belief in God; he does need it to inform his ignorance and correct his misconceptions.

By reasoning equally superficial would Goethe (and some of his thorough-going admirers with him) defend his tendency to pantheism. He fancied that to give personality to God was to banish the Creator from his work, and to represent him as sitting on high, 'seeing the world go.' The Christian theist, however, believes that God is in the world as well as above it. In fact, to remove or impair our apprehension of the personality of God is to remove him *farther from us*. For the God with whom the heart communes is the near, the besetting God. The abstraction called God, which waves in the grass on which we trample, is far away. The friend a hundred miles distant is nearer to the spirit—the true self, than the house wherein the body dwells. Mere physical proximity effects no nearness in the domain of spirit. Sympathy is contact. In nature is no sympathy,—only the imperfect sign of the sympathy which is elsewhere.

Altogether praiseworthy is the indifference of Goethe to the disputes between the rival philosophies of his time. It cost him little to renounce the pursuit after the unknowable and the unattainable. But the renunciation was not less wise and modest, the example not less wholesome. Through a long, a happy, and a famous life, he was practically reminding his countrymen that they might do better than worry themselves to death about *Ego* and *Non-Ego*. He enriched with original creations a native literature, only too prone to imitation. He took art as his province, and in that province did manful and laborious service. He did his best to correct the morbidly subjective tendency of his nation and his time. Rarely did he lose sight of his main purpose—to awaken a taste for simplicity and nature. He is not to be blamed for regarding it as his mission to write books in quiet. Why should he allow himself to be driven distracted by 'the Great Popkins question,' or any petty squabble of the kind? Let him do his work, and let others

do theirs. But thus much conceded, it must be said that this manysided Goethe was grievously onesided in other respects. His aspirations ascended but a little way above the visible and actual. Of the material he was insatiable; for the spiritual he had little relish. He disarranged the functions of life. Art stood in the place of Virtue. Beauty sat above Principle. From this error, more than all the rest, lies a danger in his great example. Degenerate Greece grew weak of old, and fallen Italy has long been feeble, in proportion as the pleasures of taste have been allowed to displace the sterner duties of life. Goethe resembles in his ethnic culture, classic taste, and southern temperament, those graceful scholars and poets who adorned the courts of Lorenzo de Medici and Leo X. However superior his genius, his aim rose little above theirs. To expect that such serene optimists would step forward as patriots or reformers were unreasonable. But it is not unreasonable to expect of any thoughtful man that the demands of the spiritual nature should be paramount,—not all but utterly unheeded. It is not unreasonable to require that when any great effort is made by truth against falsehood, by freedom against slavery, that he should take some pains to understand the nature of the conflict, and testify some appreciation of the interests at stake. Those strong and foremost natures who bear for others the brunt of progress are entitled, at least, to the sympathy and the good word of those who sit at home at ease. Many who would be themselves unequal to such self-sacrifice, are inwardly elevated by the admiration they render to the martyrs and the heroes of the past. But even of such safe sympathy and praise Goethe is singularly sparing. The same defect which rendered him so indifferent to the struggle of the eighteenth century, would have prevented his espousing the cause of progress in any of the preceding. No party, in any time, has in its possession all the truth. Only the zealot is blind to the faults of the social section with which he acts. But thus much is certain, that in some quarter a preponderance of truth is to be found. The search should be made; and that cause espoused, whatever be

its name. Such search Goethe might have undertaken, such service he might have rendered, without neglecting his personal vocation as poet. Mr. Lewes's book will contribute to remove some prejudices which have been extensively entertained against Goethe. But it would be difficult to clear him from the charges to which we have adverted. With defects of a kind so grave, the character of Goethe can be upheld as a specimen of manhood, only by ignoring the highest spiritual relationship of man. He remains for ever an example of consummate culture in one chosen walk, but far indeed from that higher completeness of which Milton stands almost the sole example among poets.

THE GERMAN COURTS.*

THE writer who would adequately record the life and reign of Charles V. must be content to spend twenty years, at least, in the mere collection and arrangement of the enormous material extant. So said Von Hormayr, the learned Curator of the Imperial Archives, a man gifted with almost incredible powers of memory. The problems of ancient history are simple, and its materials are few, compared with those which time has multiplied to exhaust the patience and perplex the judgment of the modern historian. Every war and every revolution, every campaign and almost every battle, every treaty and almost every article in every treaty, materially affecting the story of more recent times, possesses a voluminous literature of its own. Conscientiously to narrate a single incident, is to have sifted heaps of preliminary data. Impartially to pronounce a single judgment, is to have passed sentence previously in a score of petty courts.

What then shall be done with that strange product of the imperial, the gothic, and the papal past—yclept *Modern Europe?* Where is the sage who will explain to us the movements and the growth of a creature whose limbs are nations—a being made up of ever new myriads of mankind, multiform as the living symbols of prophetic vision, in every period a Proteus for change of shape,

* 1. *Memoirs of the Court of Prussia.* From the German of DR. E. VEHSE, by FRANZ C. F. DEMMLER. Nelson and Sons. 1854.

2. *Memoirs of the Court, Aristocracy, and Diplomacy of Austria.* By DR. E. VEHSE. Translated from the German, by FRANZ DEMMLER. 2 vols. Longman. 1856.

under every shape a chameleon for change of colour? Every day makes it more evident that the history of modern times can only be attempted in detail. The needful division of labour may be effected in two ways. The historian must narrow his limits either as to time or as to subject. If a special subject be selected, the time embraced may be extensive. Thus the historian may trace the fortunes of a class, a constitution, a policy, a phase of opinion, an idea. If, on the other hand, a complete history be undertaken, the period included should be short, since life is so, both for writers and readers. History of the former kind is liable to error from arbitrary abstraction. To tell of causes and not of their effects, to describe effects and say nothing about causes, is only to mislead or tantalize the reader. It is not enough to relate the enactment of a succession of laws; we require also some account of the measure, the method, the effects, of their enforcement. It is well that the historian of a court should show us how some long-drawn state procession glittered through the streets of a capital. It is better that he should also bring home to our sympathies the hopes and fears of the multitudes who waved their kerchiefs from the balconies, who surged and shouted in the squares, who swarmed on every steeple, roof, and tree. For what is the spectacle without the spectators?

Dr. Vehse has selected for his province the courts of Germany. But he has not told the story of a court in the spirit of a courtier. He does not believe that the arch of heaven was so gloriously hung with lights, or the floor of earth so variously bespread with beauty, merely that the world might be a dancing-hall or a summer-house for people of quality. The pomp of the governors cannot blind his eyes to the penury of the governed. He has, accordingly, escaped the dangers to which the writer of a special history of this description was more peculiarly exposed. He has well accomplished a worthy undertaking, and has added to our historic stores a contribution of no mean value. His subject is well arranged in frequent and judicious divisions. For while the ordinary arrangement of general history according to dynasties and reigns has been fertile

in misconception, such a method was obviously the only one suitable for his purpose. To German diligence in the collection of his materials he has not added German dulness or German obscurity in their treatment. With good qualities so substantial, it would be indeed thankless to complain that Dr. Vehse is not also a literary artist. The want of such skill and finish is the less felt as his subject abounds naturally in anecdote, personal description, and detail. The narrative of the Thirty Years' War in Coxe is less distinct and animated by far than the account contained in the pages of Dr. Vehse. His translator bears a German name, and should receive the more praise on that account for his clear and idiomatic English.

The history of Germany has been determined by its geographical position. For several hundred years has Europe fought out her most memorable quarrels in that central arena occupied by the States of the Empire. From Prague to Coblentz, from Stralsund to Trieste, its cities have been taken and retaken, times without number, by the contending forces of the north and south, of the east and west. The cavalry of every nation has blackened its plains with fire. The fiercest frontier warfare has reddened its great rivers with blood. The power of Germany has never been proportionate to its size, whether for the purposes of commerce or of conquest. Its seaboard is too straitened for maritime supremacy; its capabilities of union too uncertain for sustained territorial aggression. It has seldom been difficult for diplomacy to arm one part of Germany against another. With the consistency of selfishness, the House of Hapsburg has always been alike ready to demand the services, and to sacrifice the interests, of the German States. It was only natural that a power so insatiably rapacious in the day of its strength, should be repeatedly abandoned in the day of its weakness.

The Germans are eminently receptive, at once from situation and from character. Hence the peculiar interest of their history to the foreigner. Every one of the great surrounding nations may find in Germany some reflection of its policy, its literature, or its fashions.

The German nobility at the court of Charles V. were outshone on every hand by the Flemish and Burgundian magnificence, the Italian grace, the Castilian stateliness. Many a prince of the Empire would well nigh beggar those dependent on him at home, to furnish forth a tasteless imitation of the splendour which had dazzled him from abroad. The history of France is the history of illustrious Frenchmen. The story of every naval power is the story of native greatness. If the Italian republics intrusted their armies to the soldier of fortune, their fleets were led to victory by the Dorias and the Dandolos. But in the annals of Austria, every other nation traces the achievements of some famous countryman. Her counsels have been guided and her forces marshalled by Spaniards and Italians, Croats and Piedmontese, by Walloons, by Hungarians, by Poles, by Frenchmen, or by Scots. But rarely does her chronicle record the conquests of an Austrian captain, or the successes of an Austrian diplomatist. Her great deliverers, Sobiesky and Eugene, are the honourable pride of Poland and Savoy. Wallenstein was the child of Bohemian Protestants, and the ferocious Tilly came from Flanders. Metternich was nurtured on the Rhine. Kaunitz, indeed, was born at Vienna, but he was by origin a Sclave, by temperament and tastes a Frenchman. Every state throughout the circumference of Europe has done its work by turns in the very heart of Germany. All have contributed to mark its history with the most romantic vicissitudes, and alternately to aggrandize or to despoil that central mass, so unwieldy or so inert.

To say that the want of a living vigorous union has been the bane of Germany, is simply to state a truism. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that the sovereign power was steadily exerted for this object in the Empire, as it was elsewhere in Europe. In fact, it was the policy of the House of Hapsburg which destroyed all hope of unity while such union was still possible. To that house two great opportunities were offered for effecting the consolidation of the German States. By its short-sighted ambition both were irrecoverably lost. We can see a necessity in France for the sup-

pression of aristocratic feuds by some superior central power. We have sympathy for the kings of Scotland in their long struggle to establish among turbulent barons and savage clansmen the order of a monarchy. We can have none with the family of Hapsburg in their attempts to set up, at the cost of the Empire, an absolutism characterized by many of the vices inherent in the feudal system, without any of its virtues.

Early in the reign of Maximilian, the sagacious Archbishop of Mayence had planned a parliamentary constitution, which might have given coherence to the great Germanic body. The changes proposed would have bridged the gulf between the privileged and the lower orders; would, perhaps, have restored the old imperial glories; would certainly have rendered the crown of the Cæsars an inheritance of sevenfold value. The German Church might have survived—potent from a renovated life—to be a weightier counterpoise than ever to papal ambition. Germany, already looked on as effete—a cipher in the politics of Europe—might have led once more the van of Christendom. But the vain and volatile Maximilian, fantastical as a Quixote, without his earnestness, had but a single serious object in his life. That object was to aggrandize, by his alliances, the reigning House of Austria. Had the proposed constitution been established in Germany, he would have found it more difficult to enrich the head at the expense of the body. His opposition to the scheme of the primate was therefore decided and effectual.

To Charles V. another opportunity was presented, and blindly thrown away. It is impossible to contemplate the position of that prince, at the zenith of his power, without perceiving the magnitude of the change he might have effected in the destinies of Europe. When, in 1530, he held the Diet of Augsburg, he was but thirty years of age. Confident in the vast resources at his command, he had violated, with the impunity of an unquestioned despot, every article of his election oath. His great captains had broken for ever the power of the Swiss, under the walls of Milan. The flower of

French chivalry had fallen at Pavia, and his most formidable rival had been, for upwards of a twelvemonth, a captive at his mercy. The pontiff had ventured to oppose him; and ere long the lansquenets of Bourbon had stormed and sacked the Eternal City. With ill-concealed triumph, Charles had ordered public prayers in Madrid for the liberation of that insulted Holiness, whom he actually held a trembling prisoner within the walls of St. Angelo. With the fleet of Doria, he had vanquished his enemies by sea as well as by land. At Bologna, he had just been solemnly crowned King of Lombardy and Roman Emperor, by the hands of the now submissive Clement. As he crossed the Alps to enter Germany, he would be told how the dreaded Turk, strong in possession of Belgrade, flushed with the conquest of Rhodes, had been repulsed by the stout-hearted gunners of Vienna.

While his arms were thus successful against foreign powers, two formidable insurrections had been suppressed at home. Led by the gallant Sickingen, the lesser nobility had risen against the princes of the Empire. But an isolated order—disdainful, in its knightly pride, of alliance with the people—sought in vain to cope with such antagonists. Then followed the peasants' war. The standing armies of Maximilian had familiarized numbers of the country folk with military discipline. While their burdens were multiplied, their power of resistance also had been growing. The reformed doctrines had awakened bolder hopes, while new exactions had kindled a fiercer indignation. Their demands were moderate. Even the worst excesses of their ignorance were not without some traits of generous forbearance. But no faith was kept, no pity shown, by knight, by noble, or by prelate, to the boor. Thousands of the peasantry were hewn down in fight, butchered after surrender, slowly slaughtered, with every ingenuity of torment. Thus were two successive outbreaks quelled, which, occurring together, might have wrested from the few some freedom for the many. But the class distinctions of feudalism were still too strong. The imperial *noblesse* and the peasantry failed, each of them, for lack of that

which the other might have readily supplied. The former perished for want of men; the latter for want of leaders.

At Augsburg, then, the great question of the day is to be decided. How will the new religion be dealt with by Charles—this emperor so firmly assured in his dominion, so fearless now, alike of 'foreign levy,' or 'domestic treason'? He must know that, while he has been these nine years in Spain, the young faith has spread through every corner of his German territory. He must know that Luther's doctrine gives no countenance to popular disaffection. For did not the reformer himself at last denounce the peasants? And will not the Augsburg Confession be presented by the hands of princes? On the infancy of these new ideas Charles had looked but coldly. But they are in their infancy no longer. It is not too late for him to become himself, in part, their representative; to guide or qualify their force; to mediate between them and that Italian thraldom to which his imperial ancestry had so often set a limit.

On such a career Charles would have entered with every promise of success. A compromise might have been arranged. After some persecution of the extreme parties on either side, that compromise would have been established throughout Germany. A war of religion would not then have laid waste, for thirty years, the central lands of Europe. A counter-reformation, so unscrupulous, and so successful, could never have achieved its triumph. The reactionary crusade against freedom of thought could not invariably have sealed its success by extermination.

But the melancholy priest-ridden Charles was at heart a Spaniard. It was not for him to give the world another Cæsar of the grand old German stock. It was his ambition to rule in Germany as he ruled in Spain. To tolerate heresy was to declare himself no longer the temporal head of the Roman Catholic Church. So he condemns the Lutherans anew, and enforces once more his Edict of Worms.

Yet, amidst many possible evils, we may readily suppose that Germany suffered, after all, the least. It was, doubtless, better that

the old faith and the new should be left to do their worst and their best apart. In the absence of any vital principle of union, Germany owed new life to her great religious division.

This, then, is the purpose to which Charles, at the height of his power, dedicates all his energies; he will abolish heresy, and rule the empire of the faithful. He will crush the desultory efforts of German independence by a foreign army. He will lay that country, vanquished, bound hand and foot, upon the altar of his superstition. He will render priestcraft absolute, and make a Spain of Germany. It is true, he must temporize for awhile. He must arrange his dispute with France. He must reduce the rebellious Flemings. He must consent to pay a tribute to the infidel, that his hands may be free against the heretic. But his resolution knows no wavering.

Let us pass by some score of eventful years, and see to what this policy has brought him. On a cold and rainy night, a handful of attendants, bearing torches, conduct a litter through the precipitous gorges of the Tyrol. They hurry up the steeps with the speed of fear. Hastily they break down every bridge, as they cross the mountain torrents. The occupant of the litter is the same Charles V. —the lord of the New World and the Old. His hair is already grey; his countenance dark and sickly; his features distorted by the torment of the gout. He is flying from a Protestant army. In a few hours the pursuing troopers of Prince Maurice will enter Innspruck; they will ransack his furniture; they will fill their pockets with his pistoles; they will flaunt in the silken bravery of his Spanish suite. Consumed by rage and shame, he feels the gloom of his saturnine temperament darkening into despair. Weary of sovereignty, weary of life, he knows not where to look for aid or sympathy. He suspects, with reason, that the Pope, chafing at imperial arrogance, has been the secret abettor of his foes. He knows that his own family have been alienated by his selfish schemes. He has been told how Henry of France is raising Alsace by proclamations of German liberty. He has played, and lost. His sun is down.

Germany will never be Spanish now. Oh, for the quiet shadows of a cloister, and the sound of holy bells, and the measured lapse of the unmarked conventual days!

The designs of Charles had been thus unexpectedly baffled by the energy and the caution of a single mind. It was Prince Maurice who succeeded, where the Electors and the cities of Germany had so disgracefully failed. Luther had early discerned the nature of the young lion in that tall, swarthy, falcon-eyed stripling, who sat at the table of the Elector, John Frederick. Maurice had refused to join the Protestant league. He was certain of advancement from the emperor. He foresaw only disaster from the jealousy, the supineness, and the fear which paralysed the counsels of the reformed. Charles, who rewarded his adherence at the expense of the defeated Protestants, believed that he had secured an unthinking tool. But Maurice was not born to be the tool of any man alive. Charles held in his hands two captives—the spiritless and faithless Philip of Hesse, and the simple-minded, phlegmatic Elector of Saxony. The honour of Maurice had been pledged for the liberation of Philip. By a shameless artifice Charles had retained his prisoner, and so inflicted insult on that honour. From that hour young Maurice resolved that Philip should prove the most costly captive ever withholden by perfidious king. His plan was never whispered in mortal ear. His own secretary was as completely deceived as the Argus-eyed spies of Charles. Day after day he lived his jovial life, foremost in the chase, longest at the wine, hovering in the train of beauty, playing high at tric-trac and ombre, far into the night. Yet all the while the mine is being laid; and the power which Charles has given to this seeming instrument will destroy in a week the despotic projects of a lifetime. Under the mask of a frivolous Paris was concealed the wise Ulysses. Though entrapped and beset by wiles, it does not appear that Maurice used any weapon which his adversaries could with reason account unfair. He did not violate an oath, though before him lay imperial example. He foiled Italian craftiness by a dissimulation yet more profound.

We read with pleasure how William of Orange unlocked the secrets of the Spanish cabinet by a subtilty still deeper than the subtilty of Philip. With scarcely less gratification do we follow the swift and stealthy footsteps of the inscrutable Maurice, as he frees his country from the toils. The historic judgment does not here apply the highest moral standard. The secrecy of the strong man must be distinguished from the mere deceitfulness of the weak. No man in a position like that of Maurice, of William, or of Cromwell, will find it possible to act if he cannot perfectly dissemble. The centre of a thousand treacherous eyes—a look is talkative; a start is a self-betrayal; the movement of a muscle may let loose a rumour, or publish a resolve. These men of impenetrable purpose render services impossible to more genial and impulsive natures. But for such wisdom of the serpent, the innocence of the dove could nowhere have survived. What does it profit a country if it has only Egmonts to fall blindly into the power of its Alvas? In an age of dissimulating policy, Germany could only be rescued by the most accomplished of dissemblers.

The sudden march of Maurice on Charles, surprising him without money, without arms, without allies, issued in the Treaty of Passau (1552). This political compromise, while it arrested the persecuting policy of the Emperor, could effect little for the real redress of religious grievances. It was an armistice rather than a peace. It was one of those facile and futile arrangements which, so far from settling a dispute, contain the elements of a far more terrible conflict.

During the latter half of the sixteenth century, the doctrines of the Reformation overspread, with little interruption, the whole of Southern Germany. The sumptuous and laughter-loving Ferdinand I. was not a persecuting emperor. The jovial Maximilian II. was on friendly terms with the Protestants, and tolerant on principle. The moody Rodolph II. shut himself up in his palace, little solicitous to enforce his own superstition among his subjects. This melancholy virtuoso was absorbed in his coins and pictures, his

menagerie and his conservatories, his astrolabes and crucibles. While the emperors were formidable neither from ambition nor fanaticism, the power of the nobility was naturally on the increase. The dominions of the House of Austria were studded with the impregnable keeps, the palace-like mansions, the battlemented hunting seats, of these high-spirited barons. The courtyard of many among their colossal fortresses might have contained a village. The strength and thickness of the walls; the prodigious size of their galleries; their cisterns and their kitchens are, even in their ruin, the admiration of every traveller. These strongholds of the ancient *noblesse* frowned from the Bohemian fastnesses and the mountain passes of Styria. They were the warden towers of the vineyards and pasture lands of Hungary. They commanded town and hamlet, mill and corn-field, from the chain of heights above the wooded slopes of the great Danubian valley. Within fifty years from the peace of Passau, almost every one of the great feudatories of the Empire had thrown off the yoke of the old religion. As Protestants they became more independent of the emperor. Enriched by the appropriation of Church property, they were better able than ever to maintain that independence. They formed a league among themselves for the assertion of aristocracy against monarchy. It seemed as though the new religion was about to conserve the old feudalism against the centralizing tendency of modern times. Throughout the hereditary possessions of the Hapsburg family, the imperial authority was liable to check at every point from a Protestant nobility supported by a Protestant people. The Venetian ambassador reported that but a tenth of Germany remained true to the ancient faith. Every young Austrian of rank, who would follow the prevailing fashion, enrolled his name among the students of Wittemberg. Even in Bavaria the nobles were rapidly forsaking Rome. In the Archduchy of Austria but five of the noble houses remained Papists; in Carinthia, there were seven; in Styria, not more than one.

As the seventeenth century is just about to open, with Pro-

testantism thus triumphant, a youth of nineteen, prostrate at the feet of Pope Clement VIII., is taking a vow to restore, though at peril of his life, the supremacy of the Romish faith. This is Ferdinand of Styria, who will become the Philip II. of Germany. For forty years—during nearly one-half of that time as emperor—this man of one idea, this automaton of the priesthood, will have life and movement only for the extirpation of the Protestant religion. 'Better a desert than a country full of heretics,' was his answer to the remonstrance of a cardinal who retained some grains of prudence, some sparks of humanity. He was heard to say that if he saw at once an angel and a priest, his homage should be rendered, first and lowliest, to the churchman, not the seraph. The extravagance of his servility anticipated all that even Jesuitism could demand. By day the Jesuit was ever at his elbow; by night the Jesuit had access to his bedside. The Jesuit was the instigator of every waking act; the Jesuit was the guardian angel of his very dreams. Other emperors had placed their glory in successful resistance to the papal pretensions, in victories which humbled the Crescent before the Cross, or in campaigns which laid the keys of wealthy cities at their feet. But Ferdinand is never so happy as when they allow him to perform some menial office in the cloister or the church. This shaveling Cæsar is proud to minister as an acolyte at mass, or to toll the bell for vespers.

Ferdinand began his work, while archduke, by burning Lutheranism out of his own provinces, Styria, Carniola, and Carinthia. The nobles fled to Bohemia, whence, on a future day, they were to march an avenging army to the gates of Vienna. The people beheld with dismay bonfires of Bibles in every market-place. They saw their churches in flames, and the gibbet erected among the ruins of the sanctuary. Then they themselves, refusing to recant, were driven from their native land, wounded by the brutal troopers, impoverished by the pitiless law.

It may be difficult to conceive a hatred more implacable than that which Ferdinand already bore to the Protestant name. But

scarcely had he been elected emperor, when an event occurred which added to the fury of his fanaticism the rankling sense of personal insult. The nobles rose in armed defence, at once of their religion and their order. His capital was beleaguered by the Bohemian forces. The balls crashed through his palace windows. Through one age-long night he clung in terror to his crucifix. In the morning he was in the hands of angry Austrian noblemen. But at that moment the bugles of Dampierre are heard in the palace-yard. Five hundred Walloons have saved the imperial devotee!

Ferdinand was a coward. When a youth of twenty-two, in the midst of his soldiers, clad in gorgeous armour, he had galloped away with his suite from the dust of a herd of bullocks and swine. He had been horribly frightened by those Bohemians, and nothing is so unforgiving as fear. It would have been easy to predict the kind of vengeance such a man would exact, when, by the victory of the White Mountain, his generals had placed Bohemia at his mercy. He retained his victims within his reach by feigned moderation and promises of pardon. Then he struck the blow. The most revered of the Bohemian magnates were martyred in the circus of Prague. Forty-three millions of florins replenished the imperial exchequer from the confiscated estates of those who were professedly pardoned. The resources, the liberties, the records, the literature of Bohemia, were destroyed for ever. Then Moravia, Upper and Lower Austria, and Silesia, were devastated by every atrocity of persecution. The arts of the Jesuit and the ferocity of Dohna's dragoons were combined, to 'work out salvation,' as it was called, by treachery, by pillage, by torture, by massacre. In Silesia (which had surrendered, trusting to the imperial promise), we are told how two officers, seizing each the leg of a child, cleft it in twain, and delivered the two halves to the parents, saying, 'There you have it, *sub utraque*.' The north and west of Germany were filled with refugees. Ferdinand was about to realize his choice. The desert was beginning to take the place of heresy, and he gave thanks accordingly to the Virgin and the saints.

The old aristocracy of Austria was now replaced by a new one—by Italian, Spanish, and Croatian *parvenus*—by creatures pampered with the spoils of the wealthiest heretical houses, devoted to Rome, to Hapsburg, and the Jesuits. The profits of the proscription were enormous, for it was to their riches more than to their opinions that the majority of the victims owed their fate. Like the king of the vultures, the emperor first gorged himself, while, at respectful distance, the meaner birds of prey stood watching round, waiting to pounce on the remains his appetite might allow them. A few of the ancient families still survived, but their position was isolated and precarious. They occupied an uncertain eminence—the monuments of that vanishing system which had once sustained them in such numbers and such strength. They resembled those scattered boulders of rock which are seen in the Alpine valleys—fragments once supported, with a multitude of their fellows, by the great platform of a glacier; but now left behind, resting on the peaks and ridges of the ice, soon to slide down into the abysses upon either side.

The complete overthrow of the Protestant cause in Bohemia was but the first of many disasters. The conflict was next maintained by two gallant soldiers of fortune—the fair-haired, hump-backed Mansfield, and the open-handed, chivalrous Brunswick. Both were compelled to give way before the overwhelming forces of the Empire. Then the King of Denmark assumed the lead. But the royal veteran was driven back through his own territories, hunted to his ships, forced to sue for peace. The counter-reformation was everywhere triumphant. The armies of the great Roman Catholic League were victorious from the Pomeranian marches to the shores of the Adriatic.

But this imposing success was fraught with danger to Ferdinand. The head of Papal Christendom, and the Cardinal who governed France, could neither of them behold without alarm the dangerous preponderance which the House of Austria had acquired by its zeal. Germany lay mute at the feet of the dictator Wallenstein—the

worshipped leader of the finest army in Europe. This Duke of Friedland, with his hundred and fifty thousand men, was known to be devoted to the imperial interest. No sooner had Charles V. overthrown the Protestant League, than the jealous pontiff had begun to intrigue against the too successful persecutor. But the power of Ferdinand was now more formidable than had been that of Charles. The consequence is obvious. The leaders of the grand crusade against Protestantism were at once divided into two parties. The old feud of Guelph and Ghibelline was revived in the seventeenth century, under other names and with other tactics—was revived in the presence of an adversary contending for very life, humbled indeed, but exasperated and indomitable. That strife among the victors brought breathing time, brought succour to the vanquished. Once more the fallen cause of the Protestant found an avenger, and the invading armies of Gustavus overran the region which had been the source and scene of such innumerable wrongs.

On the one side Richelieu, on the other Wallenstein, led the two great sections of the Roman Catholic party. The intrigues of the former were seconded by the pope, by Maximilian of Bavaria, the head of the Popish League, by the new nobles of the Empire, by the Jesuits, and by the Italo-Spanish faction at the Court. Wallenstein, on the other hand, was strong in the greatness of his name, the devotion of his army, and, for a time, in the support of the emperor. He had crushed the Protestant power to make the emperor mighty, not to aggrandize the pope. He had not drawn his sword to become the executioner of the priesthood. He was the head of the German against the Italian interest. He sought to humble electors, dukes, and princes, that Ferdinand might rule them as the Kings of France and Spain controlled their own *noblesse*. He would have remodelled the Empire, substituting for the smaller Protestant princes a military aristocracy, like that which afterwards sprang up beneath the eagles of Napoleon. At a word from his master he would have marched to the gates of Rome. He was prepared to carry the war into the heart of France. There he

would have raised the nobles against Richelieu and the Crown, as Richelieu had supported the German princes against himself and Ferdinand. But Jesuit intrigue and French diplomacy prevailed on the emperor to dismiss the man whose genius might have given him almost universal monarchy.

The retirement of Wallenstein outshone the splendours of imperial state. His officers became his courtiers. His sumptuous table, with its hundred dishes, was surrounded by his great captains, pensioned, to the very least of them, with a princely revenue. Sixty noble pages, gorgeous in azure velvet and in gold brocade, waited on the stern and mysterious chieftain who read his greatness in the stars. Four-and-twenty chamberlains, with their golden keys, did the honours of his palace. In his stables a thousand steeds were feeding at marble mangers. A hundred carriages accompanied him when he travelled forth, fifty drawn by six horses, fifty drawn by four.

The victories of Gustavus Adolphus restored the dreaded Friedländer to the supreme command. He was the only leader who could save the terrified priests of Vienna from the redoubted 'Snow-King.' He felt his power, and demanded unlimited control. He rescued Austria, and became in fact the master of the state. Such services could never be forgiven. It was pretended that he had conspired against that authority which he had always laboured to make absolute. Ferdinand was thankful to be relieved by the hand of the assassin from the burthen of a benefit too great to be endured. And beside this, the confiscation of a fortune so colossal would fill his coffers in a moment.

An old legend relates how on the incautious opening of a letter sent by a water-demon, there trickled first of all a few drops of water from the corner of the scroll. The drops ran into a stream; the stream swelled to an inexhaustible flood; till at last the strength of a great inundation undermined a mountain, pushed aside and overthrew its toppling bulk, so that the summit which the stars had visited became the bed of raging torrents. Somewhat thus

did the fateful missives of diplomacy, fraught with subtle influences of evergrowing force, overturn Wallenstein, the mighty one—the holder of sumless gold, the feaster of marauding men of prey—and the mountain that stood so strong, that was the haunt of the eagle, the lair of the lion, fell prostrate with all its hoard of golden ore, and all its shadowy forest secresies, and the place thereof knew it no more!

Ferdinand II. did not live to see the close of the Thirty-Years' War. His successor, a third Ferdinand, beheld the final desolation of every district which former campaigns had spared. Cossacks and Poles, Walloons and Croats, and—ruthless as the worst—the imperial troops themselves, completed the ravage of his fairest possessions. His arms were everywhere unfortunate. His family fled with their treasure to the heart of Styria, and were robbed upon the road by the bandit-soldiery of the Empire. For eight months a pupil of Gustavus lay encamped in the very centre of his realm; and there was now no Wallenstein whose genius might arrest the progress of the Swede. We read in the saintly fable of the Middle Age of that fell dragon which swallowed St. Margaret and her cross, and then, smitten by the power of the holy thing he had devoured, lay grovelling in the throes of death, and yielded up, from his bursting entrails, the fatal prey. It seemed as though the persecuting Empire, having in like manner devoured Protestantism, was now about to be rent asunder and to perish in these convulsions —the victim, also, of its own ravening fury.

The peace of Westphalia frustrated for ever the Hapsburg design of rendering all Germany one absolute and Catholic monarchy. A great combined effort among the Romanist powers of Europe, to destroy the reformed religion by the sword, had signally failed. As they owed their first advantages to dissension among Protestants, so they owed their final discomfiture to dissension among themselves. The most zealous among them had exhausted their own resources by the ferocity of their crusade. Devout and devastated Austria saw heretical Sweden and Brandenburg aggrandized by a

war which had been undertaken to extinguish heresy. The very violence of her efforts had only raised barriers against herself. There are shores upon our island which owe their safety from the encroachments of the sea to that beach of pebbles which the sea itself has thrown up. The more frequent and furious the storms, the more do they add to the bulk of this protecting dyke, which they create while they assail. Somewhat thus did the blind fury of Austria, in her resolve to overwhelm the Protestants, eventually build about her, like a breakwater, an entrenchment of Protestant states, on the north and on the west. At the conclusion of the war, she saw the Dutch Republic acknowledged as a sovereign power. She saw France assume the lead in Europe. Was it for this that Ferdinand had paid the Cossack hordes to burn by hundreds his thriving Austrian villages, to maim and massacre by thousands the most industrious of his subjects? It was true that the House of Hapsburg could now hold court at Vienna, surrounded by an aristocracy the most servile in the world—by ennobled freebooters, spies, and desperadoes—by informers gorged with the price of infamy, and butchers red with the blood of the people—by men whose villanies were to be reckoned by the decorations which they wore—men who owed the glitter on their breasts to the blackness of their hearts. But by a righteous retribution, the gain to tyranny at home was the loss of influence abroad. German princes did not now, as formerly, call the emperor master. Compared with the King of France, he was insignificant. The emperor was a hero to the valets of the Empire—and to them alone.

The age of religious wars had passed away before the Thirty-Years' War attained its close. Already had the European states begun to form combinations on a principle which overlooked the differences of creed. No man did so much as Richelieu to introduce this great change in the international politics of the continent. That rigid churchman, the persecutor of the Huguenot at home, was abroad the ally of the Protestant Swede against the Catholic emperor. It was Richelieu who arranged that peace with Poland

which left Gustavus Adolphus free to assail the Empire. Throughout his brief and glorious career Gustavus found his best auxiliary in the arts, the money, and the arms of France. When the Swedish hero was no more, his Chancellor Oxensteirn concerted his plans with Richelieu, and his general, Wrangel, laid waste Bavaria in company with Turenne. When the danger of Austrian supremacy had passed by, the ambition of Louis XIV. repeatedly united the Papal and the Protestant powers of Europe against the overweening pretensions of France. At the head of one such coalition stood William III. The victories of another were won by Marlborough and Eugene. When the War of the Spanish Succession opened, the Jesuits who ruled the punctilious dulness of the Austrian court were but too happy to secure the support of the heretic. The monkish Leopold filled his ranks with Prussian and Hanoverian troops, his exchequer with Dutch and English gold. But this assistance was not obtained without mortifying concessions. Such an alliance with powerful and wealthy Protestant communities let in some rays of light which pierced even the priestly darkness of the imperial cabinet. A step had been gained when the emperor could affect no longer to ignore the political existence of heresy among the states of Europe. The power of obscurantism in Austria itself was still farther shaken when that country became dependent on Protestant governments for supplies. A third shock was inflicted by the entrance into the very court of Vienna of that sceptical philosophy which had been rendered fashionable by France. Thus far Austria was compelled to advance a little with the rest of the world. But the Austria of the present day—the Austria of the Concordat—seeks to abolish all memory of her brief twilight, and would return to a more than mediæval darkness.

In Joseph I. the Empire received a sovereign whose youth, unlike that of his predecessors, had never been poisoned by the arts of priestly education. Never had emperor exacted with more insufferable rigour the ceremonial observance of a court. But under the cumbrous traditional mechanism a new spirit was at work. During

his short reign the War of the Succession was prosecuted with a vigour which amazed those courtiers who had grown old under the Chinese *régime* of that phlegmatic teller-of-beads, Leopold I. Joseph read and thought for himself. He was an enthusiastic admirer of Marlborough. He placed Eugene on the footing of a friend. He mortified the Jesuits by his sneers; he terrified them by his threats. In vain did they write home to the Pope; in vain did they dress up their best ghost, to scare the innovator with menace from another world. The hobgoblin was flung into the palace moat. His Holiness was told to be quiet, lest worse things might follow.

The successor of Joseph—that feeble and listless piece of pomposity, Charles VI.—ventured, in many things, to follow the more liberal policy of his brother. For he had visited England and Holland, to whose alliance he was under the deepest obligation. He held the Jesuits in check, and so arrested extensive persecution. He enforced conventual reforms, and so put down many houses of ill-fame.

Charles was not only himself destitute of vigour and ability, he knew not how to discern or appreciate such qualities in others. Yet the finest military talents of the age were engaged to fight his battles. Peterborough and Starhemberg retrieved his fortunes in Spain. Eugene, as commander, diplomatist, and statesman, devoted to a thankless master the maturity of his extraordinary powers.

It is impossible to proceed with the story of Austrian Absolutism till we have paused to look on this Eugene—so incomparably the greatest man of his time—in so many of his thoughts beyond it—so wise, so brave, so good. His personal appearance is by no means one of promise. Below the middle height, with a long, lean face, of dark complexion, with a prominent nose, its great nostrils blackened by Spanish snuff, his dark and lustrous eyes are the only redeeming feature in a countenance usually directed upwards, as though wistfully seeking a something in the air. His demeanour is courteous, measured, almost cold. He is not more superior to the men about him at Vienna by the fertility and compass of his genius than by

the moral elevation of his character. Where bribery is universal and excused, Eugene is incorruptible. Where implacability is identical with honour, Eugene was never known to avenge himself upon an adversary. Assailed by intrigue and calumny in their most trying forms, he retained unruffled his admirable good humour. During a time of distress, Eugene increased the number of his workmen when others were reducing theirs. He declared himself prompted to religion, not so much by a dread of God as by gratitude for his benefits. 'If I thought,' said he, 'that my soul would die with my body, I should still strive after goodness, I should act as I do now.' During many years of Jesuit censorship, art had disappeared, and literature grown dumb. Eugene adorned the capital with public buildings. It was his delight to fill his choice and sumptuous library with curious books and manuscripts. His collection of engravings is still the pride of the Imperial gallery. He was the friend of Leibnitz, he corresponded with Montesquieu and Boerhave. So many famous victories never awakened in him the insolence of success, or the vain man's craving for applause. Never had the empire at the head of affairs a counsellor so free from the characteristic vices of the imperial policy,—a grovelling despair after failure, a rapacious arrogance after success. He did all that one man could do to restrain the senseless extravagance of the court, and to bring about a more equable distribution of the public burdens. It is scarcely necessary to add that a character so great and noble became the natural mark of Jesuit malignity. There is reason to suppose that a poisoned letter (happily, fatal only to a dog,) which Eugene received after the battle of Oudenarde, was, in fact, a characteristic token of regard from the fathers of the Society of Jesus.

Very striking is the contrast afforded by the courts of Berlin and of Vienna under the contemporary sovereigns, Frederick William I. and Charles VI. At the former you see only military men: everywhere blue coats, pigtails, and long swords: no flowing perukes, gorgeous brocades, or French finery. At the latter, the throng of courtiers wear the short black Spanish cloak, set off with point lace,

red stockings, and red shoes. No one in regimentals is presentable. Those who glitter with jewellery are the high nobility. Those distinguished by red heels are the lesser—the *Di minores*. There stands the emperor, splendid with scarlet and gold embroidery, bedecked with many-coloured plumes, while every one bows low, and drops upon one knee. His very name may not be pronounced on a public occasion without a similar reverence. Ten paces taken by him are equivalent to thirty paces advanced by an elector; and the Lord Chamberlain would pronounce the imperial glory for ever tarnished if his Majesty acknowledged the electoral genuflexion by more than half a bow. Those admitted to an audience have paid much and waited long.

At Berlin, on the contrary, Frederick William calls every officer his comrade. Every private among his dear 'blue boys' finds ready access to a sovereign who is rather his colonel than his king. He is a father, in his rough fashion, to all the men of that tall Potsdam guard which his crimps have collected for him from every part of Europe. For giants are his hobby; and at Potsdam it is not length of pedigree or length of purse, but length of man which carries the day. At Vienna there are some thousand chamberlains. At Berlin, four generals suffice, for all such offices, a king who lives hard, works hard, and expects all about him to do likewise. Both courts lead a monotonous life, from causes the most opposite. At the one there is too much to do, at the other too little. The monotony of Berlin is the monotony of a barracks and a house of business combined—now the parade, now the accounts, now the audience, as each inexorable hour draws on with its methodical press of work. The monotony of Vienna is that of interminable ceremonies, torpid drives, leaden pageantry. The Prussian king seems to be always inspecting balance-sheets or drilling his men. The Austrian emperor is always seated in state upon his throne, or kneeling in state in his church. During Lent, church-going was carried to such excess that life must have been scarcely supportable. Poor Duc de Richelieu! Nothing on earth would have induced him

to become ambassador at Vienna, if he could have foreseen his fate. 'No one,' he writes, 'but a Capuchin in the rudest health, could hold out under the life we have been living lately. I have not had a quarter of an hour a day to myself. Between Palm Sunday and the Wednesday after Easter I calculate that I have passed a hundred hours in church with the emperor!' Unfeignedly do we pity him. It ought to have been considered in his salary.

The emperor always considered it beneath him to inquire into money matters. So half Vienna lived on his kitchen and cellar. It is easy to understand how it happened that one year he was charged 4000 florins for his parsley. Official and courtly blood-suckers drained the resources of the state. To walk thirty miles on a hot day might somewhat fatigue a robust pedestrian, even on level ground, and in England; but it would be impossible to walk half that distance through some of the woody regions of India, with midges and gnats, ticks and musquitoes, biting the skin, or burrowing in the flesh, with fifty leeches clinging to each leg, with leeches crawling down the back, leeches trying to hang at either eyelid. But such a traveller in India is not at greater disadvantage, compared with him in England, than the Austrian government of Charles VI., compared with the administration of Prussia under her second king. Frederick William drove hard bargains with every one. No aristocratic idlers sauntered about the precincts of his court. He was rough in manners, furious in temper, coarse in speech. He seldom passed a day without venting a passion by kicking, caning, and cursing some one near him. But he was an honest man, and he had a conscience. His people never groaned under a burden which he was too selfish, too indolent, or too timid to remove. He treated with bitter contempt the petty disputes about place and precedence which at Vienna would have assumed an import scarcely less momentous than the arrangement of a treaty or the scheme of a campaign. Eleven of his ministers of state were commoners by birth. He promoted officers from the ranks. He would be served by none but Prussians. He bequeathed to his

successor a treasury filled by parsimonious self-denial; an army, the best disciplined in Europe; and subjects united as one man in that vigorous sense of nationality which no art could kindle in the apathetic masses under Austrian rule. Throughout the Austrian dominions routine and ceremony were a kind of perpetual consuls—a duumvirate, regulating and marring all things, from the course of justice to the courses of a dinner-table. A dish had to pass through four-and-twenty hands before it could reach its destination beneath the nose of Majesty. A memorial, or the account of a public creditor, had to be entered, re-entered, reported on, signed, copied, *viséd*, and what not, by more than eighty persons. To such processes our 'Circumlocution Office' is a winged Mercury. In Prussia the courts were terrified into better speed, lest the king should come in and imprison or hang judge, attorney, or accused, out of hand, to have the matter somehow done with. Lawyers he abhorred, and would not suffer one of the tribe to live in the country lest the farmers should grow litigious.

A room is still shown in the palace at Berlin where Frederick William was accustomed to pass his evenings—the president of a smoking-club. This apartment was kept neat and clean as a Dutch kitchen—was much like one, indeed, with its plain furniture, and shelves of blue crockery. It is easy for imagination to fill it once more with clouds of smoke, and to discern through the azure mist the king, his ministers, his generals, the envoys from foreign courts, perhaps some princely visitor, all seated round the long table, every man with his pipe in his mouth and a foaming tankard before him. The table is covered with German and French papers. Near the king sits General Grumbkow, a soldier without courage, a boon companion without faith, but a man who knows how to make himself necessary. *Biberius* Grumbkow they call him, for he is a hard-drinking old gourmand. He alone keeps an extravagant table, and the frugal king sends the foreign princes and ambassadors to him for entertainment. He is always needy, and always bribed, now by England, now by Austria. Opposite to Grumbkow sits his enemy,

the rough-spoken but kindly Prince of Anhalt Dessau, to whose spirit and discipline the army owes so much. Near him sits Ilgen, the polite, the crafty, the clear-headed,—a man of imperturbable serenity and unfathomable purpose. He has the department for foreign affairs,—the truest-hearted, farthest-sighted counsellor the king possesses. He, too, dislikes and suspects the servile Grumbkow. But Grumbkow has at once a paymaster and a supporter in his neighbour Seckendorf, the Austrian ambassador, who seldom quits the side of the king from seven in the morning to eleven or twelve at night, fair weather or foul, at the chase or the table, at the club or the parade; who has bribed every accessible person from minister to valet; who lives only to keep his Majesty in good humour with the Court of Vienna. Seckendorf hates tobacco; but see how he fingers his empty pipe, how he works his upper lip, in courtly imitation, and seems to smoke as hard as the king himself. Observe, especially, that fat man, in a preposterous white wig, with a chamberlain's gold key fastened to his coat. He is just standing up to deliver a pedantic explanation of some allusion in a newspaper more recondite than usual. It is Gundling, at once the court scholar and court fool—the butt of those merciless practical jokes in which Frederick William so delights. The favourite sport of the club is to tickle the vanity of the poor man by promises and flattery; to make him drunk and then disfigure him; to hoax him by sarcastic preferments, and then madden him by ridicule and horse-play. You see those small pans on the table, full of burning turf for lighting the pipes. One evening, a rival savant was introduced into the club to tease Gundling by presenting him with a satire he had composed against him as the 'Learned Fool.' Well, one of those very pans did the enraged Gundling snatch up, and flung the contents thereof into his adversary's face. But the enemy, nimble and strong, flew at him, mastered the heavy doctor with one hand, and in the other flourishing the glowing pan, belaboured therewith the massive stern-works of the hapless Gundling to his heart's content. Sing, O Muse! the conflict of the sages—the encouraging shouts,

and the tearful laughter of the club—the crash of broken pipes, and the torrents of spilt beer—the exultant face of the flagellator, with singed eyebrows and blackened cheeks—the yells and oaths of the struggling Gundling, as the branding implement descends, and is pressed home; and how, for four long weeks to come, he was disqualified utterly for that sedentary life, so dear to every lover of books!

In his foreign policy, Frederick William remained long faithful to the interests of the Empire. But the eccentric and parsimonious monarch of a new-made kingdom was secretly despised at Vienna. The advisers of the emperor presumed on Prussian subservience. They did not think it worth their while to be grateful where they believed they might be with impunity unjust. The indignant old king prophesied that his son would one day chastise this imperial pride.

This son of his—this Fritz, whom he had kicked and cuffed so unmercifully for his love of French and Frenchmen, of music and of books, was fully equal to the enterprise bequeathed him. The first Prussian king, elated with his new dignity, had rejoiced in the mere pomp of royalty. The second had prepared the materials of its strength. The third was resolved to make manifest before the eyes of Europe both the substance and the show of a formidable power. Only by a great war could such a position be asserted; and in a great war he speedily engaged.

Yet the genius of Frederick the Great was not essentially military. By inborn tendency he was more a man of letters than a man of the sword. Literature was his earliest passion, and his latest. His literary ability, however misdirected, was far above mediocrity. He wrote bad French verses, it is true; but to write good French verses is possible only for a Frenchman. His prose style received the praise of Gibbon. His reputation as an author has risen rapidly since the appearance of a correct edition of his works. His history excels in the sterling manly qualities. It shows that he could render full justice to an enemy. It delineates character, on the way, with that suggestive terseness so rare, except among writers who

have been at once men of action and men of books. The first military essays of Frederick, on the contrary, were by no means promising. He fled from the field of Mollwitz. He owed his first great defeat to his refusal to follow the wiser counsel of Prince Maurice of Dessau. He acknowledged that he went to school to the enemy. But the secret of his strength lay in a power of endurance which no disasters could exhaust, a power of will which no obstacle could turn aside. That right royal determination would have given him pre-eminence in any province of human action wherein the bold man and the patient is assured of success. The art of poetry was not to be learnt; but the art of war it was possible to acquire; and in that art this man of iron, winning some new lesson from every defeat and every victory, became ere long a master.

With the opening of the Seven Years' War commences a novel system of alliance in Europe. France and Austria—since the days of Richelieu so invariably foes—become fast friends. To the two Romanist powers are opposed the two Protestant—England and Prussia. Both the German courts are in want of money. A golden stream of subsidy flows from England into Prussia, from France into Austria. But England was the better paymaster, and Prussia the better economist. Frederick said that he retained Silesia, in the end, because he kept the last dollar in his pocket. Napoleon used to say, that in every battle the victory lay with him to whose last battalion the enemy had nothing to oppose. What is true of men in an engagement is no less true of money in a war.

The war was commenced by Frederick with characteristic energy. All the resources of his kingdom were collected for the struggle. There is no waste, no idle show; all is grim, terrible earnest. His plans are secret, his execution swift and unerring. Silesia has received him with joy. Saxony is soon at his feet. The treachery of allies, the overwhelming combination of his enemies, cannot dismay him. Defeats which would have driven many a more skilful leader to submission, are with him the precursors of new victories.

He is greatest at the most critical moments. In this lay his superiority. Admirable was the vigour of his design, when his army was in its strength; but surpassing all, the higher daring of his greatest exploits when that army had become a wreck.

Nor was vigour wanting to the councils of Maria Theresa. Her personal antipathy to Frederick amounted to a mania. The wary Daun was a skilful general; but, happily for Frederick, fettered by bigwigs of the Aulic Council. The genius of Loudon—that red-haired, ill-favoured, taciturn man, whom they cannot appreciate at Vienna—was of a much higher order. But, happily once more for Frederick, Loudon was ill-supported. Austrian corruption had so impoverished the treasury, that his victories were barren. But the master mind of the imperial cabinet, the real antagonist of Frederick, was Prince Kaunitz. It was he who secured the alliance of France when the war began. It was he who repaired the shattered finances of Austria when the war had closed. While ambassador at Paris, Kaunitz had won over Madame de Pompadour. He returned to Vienna to make French influence paramount there. At his instance, the haughty Maria Theresa wrote to the mistress of a French king as to an intimate on equal terms. Great, indeed, is the contrast between Kaunitz and Austria's former great statesman and captain, Eugene. France was to Eugene an abomination; but Kaunitz beheld in a Parisian salon his ideal of life. With Eugene is brave and simple nature, fresh and beautiful. With Kaunitz all is hard and artificial brilliance. The contrast between these two natures resembles that between a May-day bough, fragrant with blossoms, bright with dew, and those branches which the Salzburg miners produce from their pits, glittering with metallic deposit, encrusted upon every spray with a sparry frostwork of diamond, but sapless, scentless, dead. Kaunitz rivalled Frederick himself in his admiration for the genius of Voltaire. He viewed the priesthood through the medium of Molière's *Tartuffe*. It was he who extorted from the reluctant, and even weeping, Empress, an order for the suppression of the Jesuits. Her consent was only

yielded when the minister disclosed to her the way in which her Jesuit confessor had forwarded her most secret thoughts to Rome. The resolute example set by Kaunitz was afterwards followed by Choiseul in France, and Pombal in Portugal. But these expulsions of the order by indignant governments brought only a temporary relief,—like that obtained by the peasant in the Roman apologue, when he shook his coat to free himself from vermin.

Meanwhile the state of France under Louis XV. and the Pompadour was in reality more critical than even that of Austria under the heaviest reverses of the war. Yet Kaunitz—wise for his generation only—believed that he had found, in the decaying monarchy of France, a tower of strength for the decrepit Empire. He kept up a constant correspondence with the mistress; and arranged the alliance with her minister Bernis,—that rotund and brilliant little abbé—that comfortable Horace, summoned to the arduous post of a Richelieu. Poor Bernis was an honest man, who did his best, and was overwhelmed by a situation beyond his powers. Scarcely had his treaty been sealed, and the war fairly set on foot, when Frederick, at Rossbach, humbled the arms of France by an overthrow so easy and so complete, that the memory of Agincourt might count as glory in comparison. The French army, so gay in all the finery of war, with its following host of hairdressers and grisettes, had been scattered to the winds by the Prussian cuirassiers. Among the populace of Paris the murmurs grew loud and menacing. But the king and the court were insensible to national disgrace. They thought only of comforting M. de Soubise, who had lost a battle. Bernis was on the rack while Louis XV. staked the fortunes of a great kingdom with less thought than he would play a card. 'There is no king,' he cried, 'there are no generals, there are no ministers. Had we but one man among us with a will, I would be his clerk tomorrow!' For himself, he can but invoke the saints, remonstrate, lament, entreat, alike in vain. His power is too restricted, his will is too weak. He must send for Choiseul, and at last give place to him. At this point the account of Dr. Vehse is not quite accurate.

The impression he conveys with regard to the ultimate change of ministry in France is correct. Not so his indication of the steps which led to it. Choiseul was recalled from Vienna to Paris at the instance, not of Kaunitz, but of Bernis himself. As for Bernis, a little mortification was soon swallowed up in a sense of unspeakable relief, when he found himself eventually displaced by the new-comer. Now the worthy abbé will compose his shattered nerves, will sleep once more, will fill up those strange hollows in his cheeks, and lose that frightful sallowness. He will be honoured and successful hereafter as cardinal diplomatist—a shrewd observer, a skilful winning talker—but never more will he covet such responsibility at such a court. In truth, the days of the old *régime* in France were already numbered. One of the early metrical romances of Germany represents a warrior as lying, wounded and helpless, for years upon a couch, unable to find release in death, till a knight should come, who by asking questions concerning his sad estate should break the spell and give him power to die. Thus sick and powerless lay the monarchy of France. At length French philosophy appeared, and began its questioning. From that moment the old enchantment begins to lose its force: the dying monarchy will soon be dead.

On the conclusion of the Thirty Years' War, Frederick devoted the remaining half of his reign to the restoration of that prosperity which so desperate a conflict had destroyed. He remitted the taxes, for a season, where the losses had fallen most heavily. His timely munificence retrieved the fortunes of many a ruined noble, and enabled the decimated and poverty-stricken peasantry to resume the tillage of the land. He did his utmost to promote commerce and manufacture. Many of his regulations for the encouragement of trade were in reality injurious to its interests. But the good-will of his intention was itself no small impetus to industry,—somewhat as the confidence which the assurances of a physician inspire is frequently sufficient to effect a cure, though some of his medicines may have been positively mischievous. Frederick declared all citizens equal in the eyes of the law, he abolished torture, he facilitated

justice, he rendered his peasantry the envy of surrounding states. But in the arbitrary character of these well-meant reforms lay the secret of their insufficiency. To give them permanence, they required a succession of sovereigns as restless, as indefatigable, as peremptory, as Frederick himself. His government was an organization of which he himself was alone the life. It was not a legislation with a vitality of its own. Prussia flourished while Frederick lived, because his personal influence was everywhere active, everywhere discernible. The royal mind, pervading and embracing every social function, was the element in which the country had its being. The individuality of the governor was to the economy of the governed what the ocean is to the ocean plant. No sooner had his influence ebbed away, than the institutions he left behind began to lose activity and vigour, fell into collapse, hung shapeless and lustreless as the sea-weed abandoned by the tide upon the sands.

In the Austrian empire, the policy of Maria Theresa was devoted to the extinction of every national feeling among the different races subject to her sway.

The Bohemians were cruelly oppressed. The Magyar nobles were lured away from Hungary, and turned into fawning courtiers. The Sclavonic provinces were allowed to retain just so much of strength as might render them serviceable jailors for imprisoned Hungary. The centralizing process of 'Germanization' was quietly carried on by covering the empire with a network of civil functionaries, the creatures of the cabinet. This bureaucracy displaced the old aristocratic power, without lightening the burdens of a people who had long groaned beneath the petty tyranny of the seigneurs. The French police-system was imitated at Vienna. But the management of the post-office was the masterpiece of that despotic statecraft which styles its mechanism the principle of order. A secret office for the opening of letters was established at the meeting-points of all the great highways of Germany. Every such office rejoiced in its particular Sir James Graham, richly paid for secresy, usually ennobled for his dirty work. By this means, Kaunitz would be

reading copies of Frederick's letters at the very same time with the Prussian ambassador at Vienna. By this means, the state secrets of neighbouring courts, the plans or the complaints of suspected persons, received such astonishingly prompt attention at head-quarters. With two exceptions, all the Prussian cabinet couriers were in the pay of Austria, and allowed the Austrian agents to inspect their letter-bags on the road.

Joseph II., the son of Maria Theresa, early evinced his desire to emulate the glory of the great Frederick as a social reformer. Frederick said of him, 'He is bred in a bigoted court, and has cast off superstition; he has been brought up in pomp, and yet has adopted plain manners; he has been nurtured with flattery, and yet he is modest.' Joseph II. was, like Frederick, an absolute ruler, inspired by the philanthropic ideas of French philosophy. But Joseph possessed a geniality and kindliness of temperament of which Frederick knew nothing—even when no Seven Years' War had as yet baited his rugged temper into savageness. On the other hand, Frederick was less utilitarian in his views than Joseph. The former was always the patron of art, the friend of men of letters. The latter cared only for facts and figures. He freed the press from the censorship; but he remained himself a stranger to every literary enjoyment. He was a political economist, a *doctrinaire*, and could conceive only of a calculable and mensurable prosperity. Yet Joseph, again, was a sincerely religious man. His noble edict of toleration was not the fruit of a contemptuous indifference, like that of Frederick. The fatal defect in the character of the King of Prussia was his utter want of reverence for any will or power beyond his own. His gross and biting scoffs assailed every ideal and every admiration of mankind, except the love of country and the love of fame. A Frenchman happily compared his letters—so full of coarse language and philosophic sentiment—to the pages of a Marcus Aurelius, everywhere blotted with beer and begrimed with snuff. For the suppression of man's baser instincts, Frederick hoped everything from the gallows, nothing from the pulpit. Joseph II., while

granting general religious freedom, sincerely endeavoured to correct the abuses of Romanism in Germany, to free it from ultramontane influence, and to promote tolerance and enlightenment among the clergy of every creed. But the task of Joseph as a reformer was more difficult than that of Frederick. The interests for which he had to legislate were more irreconcilable; the ignorance and prejudice of his subjects more obstinate; the traditional corruption in every department of the state more inveterate by far. He himself, too, though not more arbitrary than Frederick in his changes, was more sanguine, less sagacious. Admirable and generous enterprise! But that Austrian rule, established by so long a career of cruelty and falsehood, could not be rendered, in a lifetime, noble and humane by any young enthusiast sprung from its own household. The judgment accumulated by such a past was not to be averted by one brief struggle for such a future. Never could the new wine be holden in those old bottles.

Joseph II. found the Church in Germany dependent upon Rome. From Rome his bishops received their titles, and to Rome they took their oaths. From Rome came every dispensation for marriage, and by the generals of the various orders at Rome the seventy thousand monks and nuns who burdened his dominions were taxed and governed. His new regulations laid a veto on the commands which came from Rome to Austria, and intercepted the gold which poured from Austria to Rome. The old Ghibelline policy was revived. The German Church was to enjoy a jurisdiction of its own. Every papal bull was to be indebted for its validity as law to the imperial *placet*. Every oath to the pope was to be subordinate to a higher oath—that of the Austrian subject to his emperor. No foreign power should interfere with the prerogative of the Cæsars. And within that prerogative Joseph included the merely human institutions of the Church supported by his State.

Now there sat in the chair of St. Peter, at this time, a vain and oily-tongued old gentleman, by name Pius VI. Italian flattery called him *Il Persuasore*. So 'the persuasive one' resolved to visit

his misguided son the emperor, and try what soft speech might do to recall him to submission. Slowly the pontiff travelled, through ranks of bowing multitudes who lined his road, dropping benediction on innumerable heads, even unto the capital of his disobedient child. The emperor advanced to meet him; but the papal slipper was not kissed, the papal stirrup was not held. Joseph embraced his Holiness three times, in the hearty French style, as though he were an equal. Introduced by the emperor to Prince Kaunitz, Pius held him out his hand to kiss. That hand the minister seized and—shook—with a cordial English shake—crying out, '*De tout mon cœur! De tout mon cœur!*' Afterwards the same Kaunitz (who, by the way, had never returned the papal visit,) received him, in easy morning dress, to show him his fine pictures. As they passed together through the gallery, the statesman would eagerly push and pull the pontiff, now this way, now that, like any other mortal, to get him into the best lights, to display to him the choicest beauties. Infallibility was heard to declare itself completely nonplussed (*tutto stupefatto*). Such politeness, such ostentation of welcome everywhere, but so little reverence! When, one day, he began blandly to introduce business matters, Joseph had cut him short with a courteous apology—he must first consult his counsellors. So much homage on the part of the people; such matchless nonchalance of courtesy on the part of their rulers! His Holiness went away in a beautiful travelling carriage, with a diamond cross worth two hundred thousand florins, the gifts of his son Joseph; but he had effected nothing. Nay, scarcely had he turned his back, when Joseph suppressed another monastery—as if to show how little his policy was affected by that papal visit which he had professed to regard as so great an honour. In fact, the journey had been worse than useless. To make such an attempt and fail was to have raised, with his own hands, the slender veil which had concealed the weakness of the Papacy. The caustic Frederick remarked to an ambassador—'Who knows whether even I might not some day have come to believe 'in the infallibility of the Pope? But—but that journey to Vienna!'

The present Emperor of Austria has granted to another Pius all that Joseph refused, and more beside. He has reduced the Church in Austria to a mere appanage of the Romish see. He has subjected the civil to the canon law—as 'the body to the soul.' It was the purpose of Joseph to show that the Church in Germany might be Catholic, yet not Roman. It has ever been the purpose of the Jesuits to render thoroughly Roman every Catholic community. The struggle on this question has always lain between the sovereign and the prelates, on the one side; and the religious orders, supported by popular superstition, on the other. The masses were Ultramontanist then, as now. Every attempt, whether in Germany or France, to erect an ecclesiastical nationality—to introduce what may be termed a Constitution into the Church, has proved, sooner or later, incompatible with the spirit of Catholicism. A central infallibility is the only consistent system of government for such a system of doctrine. It is in the name of a person—by the tangible reality of a pope, that the fanaticism of the populace has always been most readily awakened. It is with the Pope—the Vicar of Christ—that sovereigns have been anxious to make peace, when sickness, disaster, or old age, have awakened the sense of guilt. So the Gallican Church was forced to succumb to Rome, when superstition darkened the decrepitude of Louis XIV. The well-meant reforms of Joseph were arrested by a universal outcry that he was about to destroy religion.

Joseph died, worn out with a nine-years' struggle against the prejudices of the people, the machinations of the nobles, the malignity of the priests. The Netherlands, stirred up by the priesthood, broke into revolt. The Hungarian magnates were his enemies, for he had endeavoured to abolish serfdom, and to make them share the public burdens with the people. The Tyrol was disturbed. His army was demoralized by its disaffected officers. His Turkish campaign was a series of disasters. His health fell a prey to such incessant labours and so many disappointments. Domestic calamity crushed his failing spirits. He was compelled, for the sake of peace,

to repeal most of his reforms. The great purpose of his life had failed. They heard him praying on his death-bed—'Oh Lord! who alone knowest my heart, I call Thee to witness that everything which I undertook and ordered was meant only for the happiness and welfare of my subjects. Thy will be done!' It was time to go hence.

Nevertheless, Joseph had not lived in vain. But for him, Austria would probably have shared in the social convulsions which were now beginning to rend France asunder. Had such a sovereign reigned at the Tuileries, the Revolution would not have broken out. What Austria really needed to render her powerful, it was given him, in great measure, to discern. Succeeding events have justified his ulterior aim—have exalted and endeared his memory. But it was not for him to discover and apply the best means for the supply of the want which he lamented. Frederick the Great summed up in a sentence the source of his mistakes. 'Joseph,' said he, 'always takes the second step without the first.' The Austrian administration of the present day is the contradiction, at every point, of the principles he endeavoured to establish. That contemptible policy, and that empty exchequer, are the best apologists of Joseph the reformer.

Leopold II., the successor of Joseph, reigned but two years. That space of time sufficed to abolish almost every improvement, and to commit Austria to her disastrous war with France. But even in Vienna, men could not forget that, for a short interval, they had breathed the air of freedom. The spirit of Joseph's administration survived the destruction of its forms. The middle classes, whom he had done so much to elevate, could not in a moment be reduced to their former level. Aristocratic insolence could not venture so openly to spurn, as the *canaille*, every grade of untitled humanity.

Francis II. ascended the throne in 1792, an indolent and ignorant young man, stunted alike in the growth of body and of mind. He grew pale at the mention of business. He complained of the least exertion as an intolerable bore. He had one affection—for his own

ease; one hatred—for every form of liberty. He declared that he would know nothing of the people—he knew only of subjects. One day his physician congratulated him on the excellence of his constitution. 'Never again let me hear that word,' cried he; 'there is no such thing as a good constitution. I have no constitution, and never will have one!' Taciturn and implacable, he never forgave a political offence. Even Metternich shrank at times from a master who showed himself so immovably cold and selfish. This man, who never really cared for any living creature except himself, would listen with a sneering satisfaction to the praises of his good-nature. To seem one thing and to know himself another was his principal enjoyment. This imperial Tartuffe loved hypocrisy for its own sake, and exulted in the consciousness that his professions were hollow, that the numbers to whom he lavished promises would wait in vain for their fulfilment.

The aged Kaunitz, 'the Samuel of the Austrian diplomacy,' was succeeded in the premiership by Thugut. This minister was an incarnation of the absolutist principle. It was difficult to say which he hated most, the people, the priesthood, or the nobles. It was certain that he worshipped only power—that brute-force which might effectually coerce the despised masses of mankind. An austere cynic, without passion and without pity, he would have been justly prized by a Louis XI. His face is described by Hormayr as combining the features of a Mephistopheles with those of a satyr. He loved to be served by men of the most infamous character. Such men gratified his contempt for the race. Such men were most completely in his power. He felt comfortable in the thought that he could hang them any day. Revolutionary France was his abhorrence; but even with the democrats he would have made peace and resigned them Belgium, if they would have aided him to seize Bavaria. His emissaries were the most eager, at every court, in urging the crusade against France. But at the first prospect of advantage to Austria, he would contrive to embarrass and weaken his allies, that France might be sufficiently

strong to serve his purpose. Thus the battle of Fleurus was lost by his orders, because a secret agreement was on foot that France should assist him to acquire Venice. The Austrian general, who was not in the secret, fought in earnest. His men fell by thousands —mere food for powder. Diplomacy had arranged everything beforehand, playing with gallant lives as with pieces on a board. This was not the first campaign in which Austrian diplomacy had engaged, intending to secure an ultimate success with the pen by means of pretended failure with the sword. More than once did her policy refuse to pursue a military advantage against the Turks, because their power contributed to render Hungary dependent on Vienna. In the midst of success, the Archduke Charles was commanded to retire from Switzerland, that Suwarrow might be compelled to retreat for want of support, and so Russia, the professed ally of Austria, be foiled by France, her professed enemy. A war of conquest, however inhuman, is not a meanness. But the height at once of cruelty and baseness is attained by a cabinet which sends forth armies secretly destined to disgrace and slaughter.

Thugut was not wholly destitute of literary taste. But he dreaded the admission of the faintest ray of light into that thick darkness which he deemed so wholesome for the people. Scarcely one of the great names which were becoming the glory of the German tongue escaped the prohibition of his censorship. The plays of Schiller were banished as so many apostles of revolution. Wieland and Lessing, Goethe and Herder, were not suffered to escape. Every play of Shakespeare in which a king is killed was peremptorily forbidden. No piece might be acted on the stage in which ministers or councillors were among the bad characters. The villains of the tragedy were all accordingly degraded from the higher to the lower ranks. No character might be a scoundrel who was higher than a viscount. Thus, from the count upwards, every personage was a model of virtue. Only bailiffs, servants, or tradesmen could figure as rascals.

It is interesting to compare the overthrow of Austria and of Prussia, as they fell, side by side, before the throne-shaker, Napoleon. The humiliation of Prussia was more complete, but her power of self-recovery was far greater. Prussia possessed a Baron Stein, who rebuilt the ruins of her military despotism on a liberal plan, turning her very losses into gain. Austria possessed a Count Stadion, who, even when the capital was lost, could revive the broken spirit of the people, and animate a gallant, though a vain, resistance. In both these men was something of heroic mould. But, with few exceptions, the terrible trial to which the two countries were exposed served only to show how craven and incompetent, in each of them, was that aristocracy which enjoyed the monopoly of all command.

Alison has attributed the stand which Austria made at Aspern and at Esslingen to the spirit and the wisdom of her nobles. His characteristic reflection is, that, 'in the invincible tenacity and far-seeing sagacity of an aristocratic government is to be found the only guarantee, from the days of Cannæ to those of Aspern, for such an unshaken resolution under calamities generally considered as utterly destructive of political independence.' But another tale is told by the confidential letters of Gentz, a man employed at this crisis to support with his vigorous pen the views of the Austrian Government. The following outburst of indignation, however violent, is perfectly excusable:—

'The scum of Vienna—*I am speaking of the high nobility and the ministers*—only look to the immediate future, of which I am utterly regardless. May the devil take us, by all means, as soon as we deserve no longer to exist. But they have scarcely any feeling whatever about what has just happened—about that which is only terrible. The Austrian cabinet is sunk into complete lethargy. Now the incapacity, the inanity, nay, the infamy of this ministry, appears before the world in all its appalling nature. They are the same as they have ever been. With them nothing great can be done, either in the cabinet or in the field. And yet, even now, there

would be a possibility of saving us; indeed, I do not despair altogether, Colloredo (the old cabinet minister), at least, is actually dismissed. For the last two days (the letter is dated 22nd November), the others also have begun to shake; but all is so rotten and corrupt, that unless the whole be cast away, there is no reasonable hope. Those vilest of the vile do not care, if Napoleon only leave them Vienna. At Troppau, the Minister of Finance, Zichy, said, in my presence, 'At the price of the Tyrol, Venice, and part of Upper Austria, peace is cheaply bought.' Ah! if those fellows only were ruined, there would be good cause for delight in the downfall of the monarchy,—*but to lose the provinces, honour, Germany, Europe, and to be doomed to keep the Zichys, the Ugartes, the Cobenzls, the Collenbachs, the Lambertis, the Dietrichsteins; not to have any satisfaction or revenge, not to see any of those dogs hanged or quartered: that is more than a man can swallow.*'—Vol. ii. p. 417.

'Austria, Russia, and Prussia, as now governed, are completely incapable of doing any good, and each of them incapable in the same degree. To blind ourselves to the baseness of the Great Powers, and to their moral inanition, would be extremely dangerous; to share it, would be vile.'—p. 419.

Napoleon formed precisely the same opinion of the Austrian policy as did Frederick the Great. He wrote to Davoust, saying of the Austrian leaders, 'This is the way with these folks. At the least ray of hope they are all superciliousness, and at the first reverse cringing and cowardly again.'

Under Frederick William II., Prussia had been rapidly sinking to the position of a third-rate power. Resolved, at all costs, to maintain an ignominious neutrality in the approaching struggle; always trimming between France on the one side, and Russia on the other, the Cabinet of Berlin fell into a general disrepute, similar to that under which it justly labours at present, and from the same cause. The voluptuous court of Frederick William II. had spread a fatal demoralization throughout the upper classes. The treasury

had been exhausted by the costly and inglorious invasion of France, as well as by the extravagance of the preceding court. The worthless favourites of the former sovereign still retained the reins of power. In their hands, Prussia passed fourteen years of contemptible vacillation; and surrounded herself with scornful enemies by a succession of faithless artifices for the maintenance of peace. No power in Europe was so justly despised, as well as detested, by Napoleon. He prepared a terrible punishment. To inflict that punishment was easy. The Prussian army was perfect in the administration of pipeclay, and matchless in uniformity of pigtail. But it was officered by effeminate braggarts or aged incapables. Not one of its commanders possessed the eye of a general for the array of an army or the plan of a campaign. The lovely and high-spirited Queen Louisa alone breathed some vigour into the timid counsels of Berlin. The battle of Jena might well console the French for their old defeat at Rossbach. The case of the antagonists was simply reversed. This time it was the Prussian who trusted vainly in a bygone reputation, whose camp was all kitchen, cellar, and toilet-table, as that of Soubise had formerly been. After this defeat, nearly all the great fortresses of Prussia surrendered without a blow. The few strongholds which made resistance were commanded, in nearly every instance, by commoners, or the newly-created nobles. Those which flung open their gates with most disgraceful promptitude had been intrusted to the highest and most ancient nobility. When Napoleon entered Berlin, he was so amazed at the haste made by the people and the authorities to fall prostrate at his feet, that he did not know, he said, 'whether to rejoice or to be ashamed.'

After the reverses of Napoleon in Russia, the Prussians were the first to throw off the yoke. To the Prussian general, Von York—old Isegrim, as they called him—belongs the glory of taking the first decisive step, and taking it solely on his own responsibility. He refused to move his army to the assistance of the French. At first his boldness was disavowed by the terrified king. But soon Prussia was aroused, and the war of liberation commenced. The

reforms of Scharnhorst, Stein, and Hardenberg had given the Prussian people something worth fighting for. The cry to arms, *pro aris et focis*, meant no longer, merely—'Shed your blood for your aristocratic oppressors.' The army had been remodelled by Scharnhorst, who abolished corporal punishment, and threw open commissions to merit; irrespective of birth. Stein, though hated by the nobles and the functionaries, though outlawed by the jealousy of Napoleon, carried out his great changes. He emancipated the peasantry from the remains of feudal oppression. He elevated the burgher class, and restored municipal freedom. He broke the power of the bureaucracy which had so long preyed upon the vitals of the state. Hardenberg established the Universities of Breslau and Berlin upon a liberal basis. Fichte and Steffens kindled to enthusiasm the patriotic fervour of the Prussian youth. Well might Buonaparte abhor the ideologists. Prussia was contemptible no longer.

Austria arose more slowly to assail the still formidable power of the French conqueror. Metternich—that subtile man of expediencies—arrested the Tyrolese patriots, that Napoleon might still suppose him faithful to France. By treachery on all sides, by stealthy tortuous movements, the crafty diplomatist passed from subservience to neutrality, from neutrality to war. That great Gallic Hegemony, which the genius of one man had established, gave way on every side; and the Congress of Vienna assembled to distribute rewards and punishments among the nations of Europe.

When the danger was finally past, when Napoleon was safely shut up in his island-prison at St. Helena, the sovereigns of the continent forgot the promises by which they had animated the spirit of their people. Both in Prussia and in Austria commenced a process of retrogression. But the latter had fewer backward steps to take than the former, having never advanced, even for a time, so far. The elements of future disturbance were far more formidable, however, in the southern empire than in the northern kingdom. Prussia was at least a nationality, and in reality united. The union

of nationalities in the Austrian empire was merely nominal. An under-current of discontent wrought more powerfully to dissolve, than could the repressive policy of Metternich to maintain, the cohesion of the heterogeneous mass. The Italians could not forget that they had been bartered like chattels in a political compromise. The spirit of German liberalism, once awakened, had not expired with the war of liberation. It had even entered the south. It united, in Vienna, with the memory of Joseph II. Then, again, the idea of a great Sclavonic confederacy was beginning to agitate races far out-numbering that Germanic people which had so long imposed upon them, from Vienna, the laws and usages of an alien tongue. This conception of a nationality, as distinct from a dynasty, was no mere theoretic novelty, fermenting in the brain of Bohemian professors at the University. It contained the germ of civil war. But more dangerous than all was the effort making among the Magyar race to secure certain internal reforms. The liberal party in Hungary was engaged in an earnest endeavour to strengthen their country against Austrian encroachment, by removing those social abuses which had been the cause of its weakness. This enterprise was conducted by strictly constitutional means. The reforming majority in the Hungarian Lower House was decided. The Magnates themselves were broken into two parties on the question. At this juncture—just as Metternich was about to force Hungary back, by the strong hand, to its former feebleness—the flight of Louis Philippe astonished Europe. Within little more than a week, Vienna was in revolt, and Metternich in exile.

It is important duly to distinguish the Hungarian rising in 1848 from every previous resistance to that Germanizing process which the Viennese Cabinet had carried on so long, with so much falsehood, with so much cruelty. Former revolts had been conducted by the nobles. But these magnates were great feudal lords, ever jealous of each other, and oppressors of the subject serfs. They were themselves exempt from every burthen. The miserable people, ground to the dust, paid for everything with their labour, with

their money, with their blood. The dominion of such an oligarchy made Hungary of necessity weak. She was obliged to receive Austrian troops to defend her against the Turk. To receive Austrian troops for defence, was to allow Austria to violate every engagement—to yield her Hungary as a conquered country. Austria was careful that Hungary should acquire no new strength from within by internal progress. She was not less careful that the Sclavonic races on the one side, or the Turk upon the other, should always be strong enough to keep Hungary dependent on her for protection. None of the former aristocratic revolts—made almost entirely in the interest of a class—could eventually succeed. The nobles betrayed each other. The high-born informer revelled at Vienna in Court favour, and shone with the spoils of other magnates, who had not been speedy enough in securing their own pardon by similar treachery. The debased and imbruted peasantry scarcely knew which master was the worse, the native or the foreign.

But when last the nation rose up, those great reforms had been secured which gave to every class a social position worth defending to the very death. Feudalism had given place to a constitutional system kindred with our own, and abreast with the wants of the time. Equalized taxation, a responsible government, a more adequate representation, a free press,—these were the practical objects for which Kossuth and the liberal party had now contended with success. No Red-Republican theories, no fanatical daydreams these —as the *Times* (that plausible tool of Austrian despotism) would have persuaded men. The Austrian Cabinet, with characteristic falsehood, assured the Hungarians that it disowned the Sclavonic outbreak under Jellachich, while it was secretly authorizing that chieftain to ravage Hungary with fire and sword. But against the Croat, and against the Austrian, Hungarian patriotism prevailed. Surrounded by foes, yet superior to them all, Hungary succumbed only to the hosts of Russia.

What Napoleon said of the diplomacy of Metternich is true of the Hapsburg system, from first to last:—'Metternich mistakes

intrigue for policy; he forgets that a lie does not deceive twice.' The Hungarians will not a second time believe the solemn promises of Austria. They will not a second time hesitate to attack Vienna. The Sclavonic principalities will not a second time assist to enslave Hungary—to be themselves the next victims. Austria has every reason to fear the future in Italy. She has offended her Russian allies without conciliating her own dependencies. Prussia now refuses to promise her assistance, should Austria be threatened by a revolt in the southern peninsula. Austria, it seems, retaliates by declaring that she would not succour Prussia, should France assail the Rhenish provinces. But Prussia would be unharmed by Austrian losses in the south; while Austria is scarcely less concerned than Prussia, should France encroach upon the Rhine. Meanwhile the Concordat not only gives to Rome what even a Ferdinand II. would have refused, it justifies all the complaints of Sardinia as to the nature of Austrian occupation in Italy. It is true that since 1848, the returning wave of despotism, both in church and state, has apparently overwhelmed every former sign of promise, and reduced the continent to a subservience more hopeless than before. The demands of the Papacy, after lying in comparative abeyance, till many began to think that enlightenment had reached at last infallibility itself, have now assumed a port of insolence that revives the memory of Gregory VII. and of Innocent III. The Immaculate Conception made absolute as doctrine; England invaded by territorial titles; and Austria yielded up without reserve; these are the movements which show that the old idea of universal supremacy at Rome is active yet, as hateful, as audacious as ever. But it may reasonably be doubted whether the gain is not more apparent than real. If Rome is stronger than ever at Vienna, she is weaker than ever at Turin. From the south of the Alps rises a voice of impeachment against her rule. France and England applaud. Even Russia listens. As Prussia has relapsed toward absolutism, she has relapsed also into insignificance. Sardinia has thrust her aside. Austria is but at the beginning of her troubles. Her exchequer empty, her

protector alienated, her social abuses intensified by the absolutist reaction, well may she tremble as the cloud thickens towards the south. Our brief survey of her policy has shown how vain was the expectation, from such a power, of any honest adherence to either party in the recent struggle. Her obstinacy in the worst selfishness of oppression has rendered her hopelessly feeble. Her feebleness has made her mean. At home, the tree has been cut down, but the fruit has vanished in its fall. Abroad, after attempting to deceive all, she discovers that by all she has been detected. The succession of petty expedients is not an infinite series. It cannot much farther be prolonged. As the last variety of artifice becomes exhausted, it will be more apparent than ever that Austria is equally wanting in the power to persist in wrong, and in the disposition to abandon it.

FRENCH ROMANCES OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.*

IF Merlin were to appear to some lover of the old romances, and should offer to show him any proof of his magic art which he might choose to ask, we can suppose our student of the Middle Age to reply somewhat thus:—'Have the kindness, then, my good sir, to build me a palace of Romance, with a succession of courts appropriated to the different species, or cycles, of romantic tales. Let there be an Armorican court, a German, a Carlovingian, a Classical, and an Oriental. Let each court be fitted up with pictures and statues of the scenes and personages most conspicuous in its particular province of fiction. But, above all, provide me, in every court, with an enchanted chair of such virtue that whenever I sit down in it and close my eyes, I shall see pass, and mingle, as in a dream, the heroes and the heroines, the giants and the dragons, the fairies and the dwarfs, of Celtic, Norman, or Teutonic romance.'

For the brain of a Merlin nothing is too fantastical: for his power, nothing too arduous. Imagine the palace built, therefore, like Aladdin's, in a single night. Let us also suppose, reader, that we have the privilege of entrance. Indeed, any one will be admitted

* *Nouvelles Françoises en Prose du XIIIe Siècle, publiées d'après les manuscrits, avec une Introduction et des Notes.* Par MM. L. MOLAND et C. D'HÉRICAULT. A Paris: Chez P. Jannet, Libraire. 1856.

French Prose Romances of the Thirteenth Century, edited from MSS. by MM. L. MOLAND and C. D'HÉRICAULT, *with an Introduction and Notes.* Jannet. (Bibliothèque Elzevérienne.) Paris. 1856.

who can produce, as token, a feather from the wing of a certain bird of Paradise called Fancy.

We enter the Armorican, or Celtic court, devoted to the legends of Brittany and Wales. There, in the centre, is the famous 'Table Round;' on the wall above hangs, on the one side, King Arthur's sword Excalibur; on the other, a picture of Sir Percival's vision, wherein appeared to him the two ladies riding, one on a lion, the other on a serpent. In yonder corner the lance that struck 'the dolorous stroke' leans against the wall. The mantle of black, and white, and red, and grey, that was all made of king's beards, hangs over a casque; and, suspended on a dinted breast-plate, you see the huge hunting-horn of ivory which the knight of the Red Lands used to hang upon his oak to be blown by all challengers.

You sit down in the magic chair and dream yourself away into the vanished world of fable and adventure. There are King Arthur and his knights jousting in the meadow by Camelot. Sir Galahad, who has just achieved the adventures of the 'perilous siege,' is breaking spears marvellously, so that all men have wonder of him. Next arises Sir Launcelot's castle of the Garde Joyeuse, whither he welcomes Sir Tristrem and the belle Ysonde with great rejoicings. Presently, it is King Arthur whom you see, on a solitary adventure, watching with amazement 'the questing beast,' in whose belly is heard a crying as of thirty couple of hounds; or it is Sir Beaumains who comes to the land of the black hawthorn and the black banner, and vanquishes the black Knight, the lord thereof; or Sir Percival and Sir Ector, having nearly slain each other, are recovered by the passing by of the Sangreal, with its marvellous sweetness and healing savour. At last, those sad times come when there is ill blood between King Arthur and Sir Launcelot, when the traitor, Sir Mordred, draws away the people of England, when Sir Gawaine is killed in the last great battle of Barren Down, and King Arthur, left alone with Sir Bedivere beside the lake, is carried by the weeping queens to the vale of Avalon. It is time now to awake.

We enter next the German court, and are surrounded by Teutonic

heroes, and fond memorials of the hapless Hohenstauffen. The vision of the enchanted chair shows us Gunther and Hagen—last of the Burgundian host—standing defiant at the top of the staircase, which is now a hill of mangled corpses. The mighty Dietrich of Berne goes up alone against the terrible twain; he overcomes—he delivers them bound to Kriemhild. The fierce woman avenges her murdered Siegfried; but, with Hagen, the secret of the Nibelungen treasure is lost for ever to mankind. Or, at another time, it is Parzival whom we see, riding disconsolate through a weird forest, his head drooping, his bridle on the neck of his steed. It is his dark time, and he is full of hard bitter thoughts concerning God and man. Or we witness the meeting of King Otnit and the dwarf Elberich, whose armour blazes with diamonds and gold; or see the stalwart monk Ilsan ravaging the garden of roses, or the Norman sea-rovers carrying off the weeping Gudrun.

In the Carlovingian court, among the paladins of Charlemagne, your vision is of the long battle fought between Orlando and the heathen giant Ferragus, wherein the combatants, when weary of swordstrokes, disputed on theology; or of Orlando at Roncesvalles, wounded to the death, bidding farewell to his good sword Durindana, and blowing the final blast upon his wondrous horn. Perhaps it is the four sons of Aymon whom you see riding together on that stout steed of theirs; or Huon of Bourdeaux sets all his enemies a dancing to the notes of the fairy bugle; or Oberon, with a glittering army of a myriad fays, abashes all the pomp of Charlemagne with the splendour of the land of faerie, and, just at the fatal crisis, rescues brave Huon and fair Esclarmonde. As forms from Spanish and Italian fable mingle with your dream, you see Orlando confronting Morgan le Fay in her palace at the bottom of the lake, and compelling her by the dreaded name of Demogorgon to give up the captive knights. Then the scene changes, as is the wont of dreams, and you are looking on that gorgeous optical illusion, the Fata Morgana, off the coast of Calabria; and towers and trees, hill-sides and sails of ships, are seen far down in the glassy depths of the sea. Then, perhaps,

appears Palmerin, gathering the healing flower that grows on the Castle of Ten Steps, guarded by terrible enchantments; or you see white-bearded Daliarte, the solitary magician who hides and studies in the valley of Perdition; or you make acquaintance with that amiable giant Dramaziundo, and find him a right companionable and pleasant personage.

In the Classical court, reminiscences of schooldays and readings of romance—Lemprière and fairy tales—are mingled in strange confusion. The Roman Emperor knights Cymbeline upon the field of battle, in their young days, before Imogen was born, and when wicked Iachimo was an innocent child, playing at his mother's knee. Alexander leads a gallant array of knights and barons, sometimes on pilgrimage, sometimes on expeditions of conquest, and crowns his favourite Perceforest King of Britain. Pluto is turned into a king who inhabits a melancholy castle. The Fates are duennas, to whom Proserpine is given in charge; and Cerberus becomes a giant on guard at the castle-gate. Aristotle is a master of magic, who thwarts, with stronger spell, the enchantments opposed to the prowess of his beloved knight Alexander.

In the Oriental court, among memories 'of the golden prime of good Haroun Alraschid,' you will dream without fail of fierce Soldans, swearing by Mahound and Termagaunt—of Emperors of Byzance, who are somehow next door neighbours to Denmark—of voyages like those of Aboul Faouaris and of Sinbad—of flying carpets, magic rings, petrified cities, rebellious Afrites, cruel genii—above all, of 'Cambuscan bold,' the Tartar king, and his lovely daughter Canace. You see her leave her palace in the dewy spring morning, impatient to exercise a new gift—the faculty conferred by the magic ring of interpreting the speech of birds. You see her take the crying bleeding falcon to her bosom—she questions it—she hears its sorrowful love-tale. And, in dream at least, you 'call up him who left half-told' that tale of the far East. In your vision, Chaucer's squire finishes his story; and when Algarsif, brought safe through many a peril by the horse

of brass, has won his Theodora, you behold the knight coming out of the West who is to have Canace to wife, when he has jousted with her two brethren, and proved him worthy of such a prize.

Such are some of the traditionary streams whence mediæval romance, ever changeful, ever abundant, derived its chief supplies. From the East, revealed by the Crusades, from Greece, from Moorish Spain, from the Pyrenees, from Brittany, from Cornwall, from the heart of Wales, from the stormy North, and from the haunted German forests, came legends and superstitions, memories of great battles and heroic deeds, tales of barbaric horror, records of endurance and of love; and these, mingled together—transmitted—transformed—embellished—exaggerated, make up the rich and strange complexity of chivalrous romance. Scholars divide the romances into families or cycles. But the classification is for the most part only approximate; and as in some tropic wood, thick grown with parasitic plants, so is it with the growth of fable; many a tree is found supporting leaves and flowers which belong to another plant, and are ranged in a widely different species. Indeed, the dispersion of ideas among the races of mankind resembles not a little the dispersion of seeds among the regions of the earth. Some seeds are transported by the wind of great tempests; others washed far away by inundations. Some are lightly borne away, with songs, by the birds; others cross fell and flood, adhering to the smoking flanks of the hunted deer. So with the conceptions, the incidents, the personages from which a story grows. Some are carried from their native legendary seat by migration or invasion. Wandering minstrels scatter some in camp and court, while others are the tribute of the fugitive to the land of his exile. But we may leave it to the learned to dispute concerning the genealogy of fiction. Let us for awhile believe these stories, and for half-an-hour become once more children. Let us, in this way, bathe with Sir Huon in the Fountain of Youth, and renew the simplicity of childhood. Old Time has robbed us of many things.

He has a hoard of treasures—richer far than that which wrought the woe of the Nibelungen—in a certain cavern of his which men call the *Past*. Let us despoil the enemy, and, bringing up from the depths those old fancies and inventions which he has sunk in oblivion, build them into a summer-house for our delectation. Let us do as the Lady of the Hidden Isle did, who built her a gorgeous palace out of the treasures contained in the ships sent against her by her enemy. Let us read the old tales, remembering that they were once the delight of men of like passions with ourselves—that the *jongleur* told them amidst the rapt attention or the fierce applause of knights and squires, stretched on the greensward in the summer, or lounging on the rushes before the great hall fire in the wearisome winter time. How pleasant is it to think, as we read some metrical romance of old times, that (as saith old Gower of the *Tale of Pericles*)—

> 'It hath been sung at festivals,
> On ember-eves and holy-ales;
> And lords and ladies of their lives
> Have read it for restoratives.'

The volume now edited by MM. Moland and D'Héricault contains five prose romances. Of these, the first four are from manuscripts of the thirteenth century, recently discovered. The fifth, which is interspersed with metrical passages, is a translation of a story previously current in the South, into the northern dialect of the Isle-of-France.

The thirteenth century is rich in rhymed romances, in satire, and in song, but we have little of its prose; and the greater, accordingly, is the interest which belongs to such specimens as these.

Great also is the interest attaching both to the language and the manners of that Northern France which was destined, in this thirteenth century, to absorb the France of the west, and the France of the south—to assert itself as the first nation of the Continent, and to humble the Papacy as no emperor had ever humbled it.

The dialect of these romances is that of Picardy, of the region about Paris, and of Champagne—those north-central provinces where that rough but vigorous life was strongest and most active, which was to unite and centralize the nationality of France. Picardy, bordering upon Flanders, shared something of the busy democratic spirit of that land of guilds and communes. Enthusiastic as were these Picards, there were not wanting clear heads among them—witness Beaumainoir and Desfontaines, who laid the foundations of French jurisprudence. But Champagne, above all, was the region of Northern France most prolific in the chronicle, the romance, the satire, and the merry tale. Grotesque shows, riotous festivals, dramatic parodies of everything solemn, were the delight of the Champenois. To Champagne belong the earliest of the romance poets, and the earliest writers of history and memoir. She boasts of ancient singers, like Chrétien de Troyes; and of nobles who wrote history, like Ville-Hardouin and Joinville.

The language of these romances, therefore, is the language of the men whose actions lead off the history of France—who laid the basis of its greatness in modern history, consolidating by head and hand—by policy and war—its many duchies and counties into a formidable kingdom. Many causes contributed to facilitate their labour. In the thirteenth century, the Normans in England began to grow cool towards their brethren on the Continent. For *our* Normans, be it remembered, are by this time men of substance: their fortunes are made; while the Normans in Normandy are but a kind of poor relations—always wanting help—always in trouble, and giving trouble. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that these latter—what with the irksomeness of the Norman yoke, on the one side, and the fair promises of Philip Augustus on the other—should have thrown themselves, but too eagerly, into his arms, and should then have been abandoned to their fate. In a few generations the last reminiscence of kindred will have vanished, and Normandy will hate England as religiously as does the rest of France.

Such was the process of consolidation in the West. In the South, when the thirteenth century opened, the Count of Toulouse was a person of far more consequence than the king who reigned at Paris. When the thirteenth century closed, the riches and the culture of the South had been absorbed, or destroyed utterly, by the more barbarous North. For Languedoc was found guilty of heresy; and Dominic and De Montfort scored the cross, in characters of blood and fire, over all that lovely region of the vineyard and the olive.

Next, we see this very France—so greatly indebted thus far to the papacy for her own development—assuming the port of the master. Unwittingly she avenges on the Popes the blood of the last of the Hohenstauffen. In reality, the cause of the Empire is maintained in the thirteenth century, not by Germany, but by France—that France which a pope had summoned to oppose the German. For the cause of Emperor against Pontiff is the cause of the secular against the spiritual—and it is represented, in fact, by any temporal kingdom whatever, strong enough to hold the Pontiff in check. A sense of right which is not the casuistic sense of the church; a law of duty which is not the ceremonial duty of the churchman, now assert and even avenge themselves. When a French lawyer—the intrepid and relentless Nogaret—beards the trembling Pope at Anagni, when, in his person, the lay power has successfully asserted itself against the merely ecclesiastical—the act is significant of a great and necessary revolution in the thoughts of men—a revolution of which France was the first to reap the largest and most direct advantage.

And now let us come to the romances themselves. MM. Moland and D'Héricault have discharged their editorial functions in a manner most praiseworthy. Their object has been to produce a volume which shall interest the general reader, and not the scholar merely. Their introduction conveys the requisite amount of literary and philological information with clearness and brevity. In the notes they have appended to the text, they are content to

remove as simply and expeditiously as possible, the principal verbal difficulties which the old French presents even to educated readers. Their remarks are really elucidations—not obscurations, as antiquarian hypothesis and disquisition too frequently become.

We shall begin with the story of *King Florus and the Fair Jeanne* (*Le Roi Flore et la Belle Jehanne*), not because it is altogether the best, but because it transports the reader most completely into the world of feudalism, and best illustrates the manners and spirit of the time. For it must never be supposed that fictions such as these—even when fullest of improbable incident or extravagant adventure—are without their use for the gravest purposes of history. Our dreams take their complexion from the events and employments of the day. In like manner, the ideal world of romance takes its tone from the actual world of daily life. The sculptures of Nineveh, while they exhibit monstrous symbols, like the winged bulls, and strangest combinations of bestial and of human forms, do yet accurately depict for us the costume, the ceremonies, and the usages of remote antiquity. And so the chivalrous romances, amidst the wildest creations of the fancy, exhibit to us the manners, the apparel, the solemnities, the recreations, of the Middle Age. The *Morte d'Arthur* itself is not more full of enchanters, giants, fairies, evil spirits, and prophetic visions, than the romance of *Perceforest*. Yet the romance of *Perceforest* portrays so fully the laws, the arms, the ritual, the spirit of chivalry, that it was chosen as his text-book by M. de Sainte Palaye, one of the first of mediæval scholars.

The story of *King Florus and the Fair Jeanne* is somewhat awkwardly told, and its simple structure can lay no claim to that *callida junctura* which is the accomplishment of a more artificial age.

Several plots or actions are carried on together, and the transition from one to the other is effected by the set phrase—'Now the story is going to quit so-and-so, and to tell of so-and-so'—in a word, the fabric leaves visible all the knots and ends of thread. We shall

confine ourselves as much as possible to the main line of incident, where the matter has interest fully sufficient to compensate for anything homely or unskilful in the manner.

A brave knight, dwelling on the marches of Flanders and Hainault, had a daughter of surpassing beauty named Jeanne. He had also a squire named Robert, to whose fidelity and courage he was indebted for many a prize in the lists. The wife of our good knight was anxious to see him take some steps toward providing a suitable match for their lovely daughter. Finding her husband, who thought of little but feats of arms, careless about the matter, she urged the squire to use his influence with him. Accordingly, as they were on their way home from a tournament in which the knight had been twice crowned victor, chiefly through the prowess of Robert, the faithful squire began to remind his master that it was time he thought of his daughter's marriage.

'She shall soon be married,' quoth the knight, 'since you wish it so much—provided you have no objection.'

'I? Assuredly not, sire.'

'You give me your word on it?'

'Yes, sire.'

'Robert, thou hast served me right well. I have found thee brave and true, and what I am thou hast made me. Through thee I have gained five hundred *livrées* of land.* I had only five hundred at first, now I have a thousand. I tell thee thou art very dear to me, and therefore will I give thee my fair daughter, if thou art willing.'

Our readers will observe here, how completely the tournament was the business of the knight in those days. A poor knight might become rich; a rich one might double his estate, by going from tournament to tournament, and winning the arms and horses of his vanquished antagonists, or their equivalent in money.

Our grateful knight is in earnest. In spite of some opposition on the part of his lady, he betroths Jeanne to Robert, knights him,

* A *livrée* was as much land as brought in a livre of rental.

and settles on him four hundred *livrées* of his land. The marriage was to take place on the day following that on which Robert had been made a knight. Now it so happened, that Robert had once, when in peril of his life, vowed a pilgrimage to St. Jago of Compostella, to be undertaken within a day from the time when he should have received the knightly spurs. Sad at heart, but piously true to his vow, he tells his lord that he must leave his bride in the church when the marriage has been solemnized, and ere noon ride away towards Spain. One Raoul, an evil-minded knight, who plays the Iachimo to our Posthumus, lays him a wager of four hundred *livrées* of land, that the wife thus speedily abandoned shall prove faithless—that he, Raoul, will bring to her husband, on his return, proofs of her inconstancy, or forfeit the stake. The depositions are taken in the presence of the seigneur. Robert departs, confident in the virtue of his bride; and she remains to offer prayers for the safe return of her beloved lord.

Raoul, unable to attract the slightest notice, begins to tremble for his land. He corrupts one of Jeanne's domestics, and partly by stratagem, partly by violence, furnishes himself with tokens which will support but too strong his boast of her infidelity. Robert returns in safety, but, within a day or two, his joy is turned into anguish. The seeming proofs adduced by Raoul are not to be gainsaid. In a moment, love and lands are lost together. Without speaking a word he takes horse and secretly departs for Paris.

The fair Jeanne, vainly protesting her innocence, reproached by her father, abandoned by her husband, adopts a brave resolve. Cutting off her beautiful tresses and assuming the dress of a squire, she rides towards Paris in search of her husband. Having discovered him without much difficulty, she enters into conversation, and asks whither he is going. He tells her that he has no purpose, no hope; she whom he loved best in the world has proved untrue; and his broad lands, too, they are gone. Under the name of John, she then offers her services as his esquire. When he replies that he cannot afford to hire her, is penniless, in three days must sell his

good steed, she shows him a sum of money she has with her, which she begs him to use. Right gladly, and with many thanks, Sir Robert accepts her help; and they travel together to Marseilles, attracted thither by rumours of war in that neighbourhood.

Meanwhile, a sore sickness befals the false Raoul, and believing himself about to die, he confesses to a priest the artifice by which he has blasted the reputation of his lord's daughter, and reduced his brother knight to penury and exile. Saith the priest, 'Perform the penance I enjoin, and I will take your sin upon my soul; you shall be quit of it. You must promise and give pledge that you will, as soon as recovered, assume the cross, go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and truly confess your crime to whomsoever you meet that shall ask you the reason of your journey.' But Raoul, when restored to health, showed little disposition to keep his vow; till the good priest at last threatens to acquaint the seigneur with his guilt. Then, indeed, the reluctant sinner promises to set out 'on the March passage.'

It appears that, after the commencement of the Crusades, there were, every year, two regular seasons of departure for Palestine, on each of which a fresh company of pilgrims and Crusaders set forth together. One of these seasons was called the March passage, or *Passagium vernale;* the other was the summer, or August passage—styled, from its proximity to the saint's day, *Passagium Joannis.*

When Sir Robert and his squire reached Marseilles they found, to their great disappointment, peace instead of war. The knight was troubled. 'How,' he asked, 'shall I repay the money thou hast lent me? Yet repaid thou shalt be, if I must sell my horse therefor.' Squire John comforted him, saying that he had some money still left—that he was a first-rate baker—with the proceeds from the sale of their horses he would purchase corn, &c., and begin to sell French bread. The plan succeeded admirably. In two years they had laid by money sufficient to rent a large house, which the knight stocked with good wine, and fitted up as a hostelry. A

gainful life, and a right pleasant, was this for Sir Robert, who had his horses and his servants, and enjoyed the company of the noblest knights and bravest gallants who passed through, or who abode in, wealthy Marseilles. In four years, says our business-like story-teller, they had made more than three hundred livres, exclusive of their furniture, which was fully worth another fifty.

Raoul, on his way to Palestine, must needs lodge, with his three squires, at the French hostelry. Jeanne recognised him at once. She inquired into the cause of his pilgrimage, and received from his own lips that full account of his transgressions which he was bound by his vow to render. On his return, he visited them again. Soon after his departure, Sir Robert was persuaded by his faithful squire to turn their possessions into money, and return to his old home near Hainault. His seigneur received him with great rejoicings, Raoul appearing with the rest at the festival. Robert now related fully to his squire the story of his wager, and how he had lost thereby the joy of his life. 'Sir,' said John, 'if you will challenge him as a traitor, I will fight with him for you.' Accordingly, when John persisted in his intention of publicly charging Raoul with foul treason in the matter of the count's daughter, Sir Robert came forward, and threw down his glove. Raoul reluctantly responded to the challenge; pledges were given in presence of the Count, and a day of combat appointed. After a long and fierce contest, the vanquished Raoul, with the sword of his antagonist at his throat, confessed his falsehood, and was sentenced to perpetual banishment.

But the joy of the victor was alloyed by grief for the absence of his trusty squire. About a fortnight previous to the day fixed for the wager by battle, John had vanished, and Sir Robert sought him in vain. In fact, the fair Jeanne had meanwhile thrown off her disguise, and discovered herself to one of her cousins at the court, who secreted her in her chamber. While waiting in seclusion till her lord should have punished their adversary, her beauty recovered its lustre; and her cousin, when she saw her in apparel worthy of

a princess, was astonished at her loveliness. Jeanne now sends for her father and mother, who, with tears, and speechless emotion, embrace their long-lost child. Next, Sir Robert is overwhelmed with joy by the inexplicable recovery of the wife he thought lost to him for ever. Ere long, he details to her the invaluable services rendered him by his lost squire, and announces his intention of setting off on the morrow, never to rest till he has found him. 'And will you leave me?' said the lady. 'It is my duty,' answered he; 'for no man would do for me what he has done.' 'He did but what he ought,' replied Jeanne. In short, she thinks it now time to tell him who the squire really was, and how, under that disguise, she had been constantly at his side. Unspeakable is their happiness. They live wealthy, honoured, loving; and, when the seigneur and his lady die, succeed to the inheritance, still farther enriched by the knightly achievements of Sir Robert.

Here the story, according to our modern notions, ought to end, without saying anything of King Florus. The remainder of the tale relates how that potent monarch, childless and a widower, sent for the fair Jeanne, some years after the death of Robert, offering to make her his queen. She returns a spirited reply—let him come and see her if he will; the true knight seeks the lady, not the lady the knight. The king, unused to such language, is at first angry; but when some of his barons represent to him that such a reply was, in fact, an indication of her worth, he sets forth to visit the still beautiful widow in her castle. She accepts him, and, to his great joy, brings him a girl and a boy to succeed to his domains. Jeanne's son won him great renown, and became Emperor of Constantinople; while her daughter, who afterwards became queen in her father's stead, married a son of the King of Hungary, and so came at last to rule over two kingdoms. The fair Jeanne, says the tale, whom God had so honoured for her fidelity and goodness, lived half a year after witnessing the greatness of her children, and then made a goodly and a peaceful end.

The literature of the Middle Age has given us nowhere a finer

ideal of womanhood than that presented in the character of the fair Jeanne. In the touching story of Griseldis, we see a submission rendered to the brutal caprices of man which is only due to the mysterious dispensations of God. As Griseldis is of humble origin, her cruel lord exercises not merely the supposed prerogative of the husband in relation to the wife, but the prerogative also of the seigneur in relation to the vassal. This tyranny of a privileged class is the feature of feudalism most unnatural and most repulsive to our sense of humanity and justice. La belle Jehanne, however, while lowly-hearted, is never weak. In the face of adversity, she displays promptitude, courage, fertility of resource. Her love, deep, and true, and tender, is no sentimental passion—is her strength, not her weakness—is manifest in endurance and self-sacrifice, not in vain wishes, sighs, and tears. While brave, she is never unwomanly; and the fidelity of the squire is the devotion of the wife in another form. The simple practical spirit of the tale, its freedom from exaggeration, the strong sense of duty that pervades it, the absence of all parade or self-consciousness in the performance of righteous or heroic acts,—these are qualities which must strike every reader—qualities which made the strength of the northern mind—qualities which, refined and clothed with all the grace of womanhood, are concentrated in the character of la belle Jehanne.

The story of *King Florus and the Fair Jeanne* was imitated in the fifteenth century, and has been inserted by M. Fr. Michel in a volume of his *Panthéon Littéraire;* but the old MS. of the thirteenth century, containing both this tale and that of the Emperor Constant, in the Picard-Walloon dialect, is now given to the public for the first time.

We shall now, for the sake of an instructive contrast, give our readers an outline of *Aucassin and Nicolette*—the last *Nouvelle* in this collection of MM. Moland and D'Héricault. Its form is peculiar, consisting of prose interrupted, at irregular intervals, by passages of monorhymed metrical narrative. Unlike the four pre-

ceding tales, destined only to be read, this little romance was designed to be partly recited and partly sung by the *jongleur*. The rhymed passages are accompanied by the musical notes to which they were sung, probably in chorus, by the minstrel and his company. The higher form of art here employed, and the tone of the romance, as well as the scene of its action, all indicate a Provençal origin. With due allowance for some slight modification in passing through the hands of a translator belonging to the sober and more serious North, the story may be regarded as a truly characteristic product of the sunny, passionate, free-thinking Southern France. Several translations of it appeared in the eighteenth century, and Sedaine converted it into a comic opera.

The aged Count Guarin de Beaucaire has an only son, named Aucassin; a tall and stalwart youth, with long fair curling hair, bright eyes, and a comely countenance. But Aucassin is so far gone in love for Nicolette that he will not mount steed, or don his armour, or perform any knightly duty,—even though his father is sore pressed by his old enemy, Bougars de Valence. Nicolette is a beautiful girl who was purchased by a viscount—the vassal of Count Guarin, from the Saracens; baptized, and adopted as his daughter. Count Guarin summons the viscount, and bids him carry this Nicolette out of the country,—for Aucassin has sworn that he will not draw sword till his father allows him to take her for his wife. The viscount expresses his regret that she should give so much trouble, and shuts her up, with an old nurse, in a lofty chamber of his palace, looking out upon the garden. Aucassin, fearing the worst, presents himself before the viscount, and insists on knowing what he has done with her. The viscount quietly replies that Aucassin must marry the daughter of a king, or of a count; Nicolette is beneath him. And if his suit be other than honourable, his gain would be small even if he succeeded; for his soul would burn to eternity in hell, and he could never enter Paradise.

"'What should I do in Paradise?' replies the lover. 'I do not care to go to Paradise, unless I can have my dear Nicolette whom I love so much. It is only old priests that go to Paradise—old fellows, halt and maimed, that spit all day and all night in front of altars, and in the crypts of the churches—dressed in old cowls and old frocks,—bare-footed, bloated, dying of hunger, and thirst, and cold, and all sorts of diseases. These are the sort of folk that go to Paradise. I don't want to have anything to do with them. But I should like to go to hell; for to hell go all the gay and gallant cavaliers who fall in tournaments or in battle, and all the good squires and gentlemen. I should like to go where they are. There, too, go those fair and gracious ladies who had each of them two or three lovers beside their husbands. There go, moreover, the gold and silver and costly stuffs, the harpers and the minstrels, and the topmost men of the time. I should like to be with them, if I can only have my sweet Nicolette with me.'

"'Tis no use talking,' answers the Viscount; 'you shall never see her. I tell you, if your father came to know that you had speech of her, he would burn her alive and me too, and you yourself would have every reason for fear.'

"'I'm sorry to hear it,' says Aucassin, and so departs dolefully.'

Now consider, reader, for a moment, this infidel reply of young Aucassin. It is found not in a satire, where such licence might be expected. It is inserted needlessly, as of set purpose, in a tale of love. It was applauded, doubtless, many a time, by lords and ladies, seated round the minstrel in the gardens of Languedoc, among the birds and flowers, on summer afternoons. Where is that simple faith which many imagine the universal characteristic of the Middle Age? Aucassin listens only to his passion. In comparison with that, the authority of a father—of morality—of the church, is nothing. He is utterly Epicurean, and can believe only in things sensuous. His contempt for holy men and holy things is undisguised. Such raillery afterwards delighted the sceptical wits of the eighteenth century, and this speech became the favourite passage of a

favourite tale. Contrast with it the reverence, the dutiful self-control, of the northern romance. It is obviously the creation of another world.

A minority in Southern France protested, on behalf of a purer faith, against the corruptions of Rome. But the majority were too volatile and too voluptuous for any movement so earnest, or for any motive so high. Their quick wits detected, with a fatal facility, the arts of priestcraft; till priestcraft and piety were abjured together. The name of priest became a by-word of contempt. No lofty sense of right and duty replaced the exploded terrors of the church. Thus all restraint was taken away. Their refinement was the refinement of a pagan race and of a pagan time. Many centuries ago, Greeks from Ionia, disdaining the yoke of Cyrus, had abandoned their native Phocæa—

> 'Ire pedes quocunque ferent, quocunque per undas
> Notus vocabit, aut protervus Africus.'

They established a colony in the neighbourhood of Marseilles. It would seem as though the old Greek spirit—a something of Theocritus and something of Aristophanes, had renewed itself in the thirteenth century among their descendants—these acute, sarcastic, pleasure-loving Provençals. But their intellectual activity was ennobled by no elevation of purpose. They were strangers to self-sacrifice. Without faith, they were without strength. If they had been less wicked, they had been less weak. But their civilization was hollow; and they fell like grass before the mower's scythe when a host of armed persecutors from the North swept down and turned their singing into mourning, and their dancing into death, and all their pleasant places into a desolation.

But to return to our lovers. The old Count of Beaucaire, besieged and reduced to extremities by his assailant, Bougars de Valence, entreats his son Aucassin to arm himself, and head the defence of the town. The young man consents on condition that, if he returns alive, his father shall allow him two or three words with Nicolette,

and one kiss. He arms himself and leads a sally gallantly, but with such absence of mind (owing to thoughts of Nicolette), that, before he is aware, his horse has carried him into the thickest of the hostile ranks, and he is taken prisoner. His captors consult as to the way in which he shall be put to death. A conversation so unpleasant rouses our enamoured youth from his reverie. 'Ah!' cries he, 'these are my enemies: they will cut off my head; and when my head is off, I shall never be able to speak to my sweet Nicolette, whom I love so dearly.' By dexterous horsemanship, and good use of his sword, which they had still left him, he breaks loose, strikes down ten men-at-arms, wounds seven others, and gallops back, sword in hand. He meets, by the way, the Count de Valence, riding up on the news of his capture. Aucassin strikes him senseless from his horse, flings him across his saddle-bow, and rides with him into the town. The prisoner is allowed life and liberty only on condition of swearing never again to annoy the Count de Beaucaire. But the latter, though thus unexpectedly delivered by the prowess of his son, refuses to fulfil his promise. To the remonstrances of Aucassin he replies in a summary manner by throwing him into a subterranean dungeon at the foot of an old tower.

Meanwhile, Nicolette has effected her escape, letting herself down from the window one fine summer night by tying together the sheets and towels. Gliding in terror through the deserted streets of Beaucaire, she hides herself for awhile behind the buttress of a tower, within which she hears, through a crevice, the voice of Aucassin, lamenting his captivity. She speaks to him, and tells him she is endeavouring to find her way across the frontier to escape the vengeance of his father. Warned by the song of a friendly sentinel, she eludes the watch, crosses the wall at a part where some repairs are making, slides down one bank of the moat and climbs the other, grievously wounding her lovely hands, till at length she is safe on the outskirts of the town, at the entrance of a great forest. Having passed the rest of the night in a thicket,

she is awakened in the morning by the song of the birds and the voices of shepherds, who have come with their flocks to breakfast by a fountain, a little way within the forest. She enters into conversation with them, and by the gift of a little money induces them to promise that if the Count's son should come that way, they will tell him that there is an animal in the wood of such value that he would not part with one of its limbs for five hundred gold marks, and with virtue, moreover, to cure him of his trouble, if he can find it within three days. Then she passes into the depths of the forest, leaving the shepherds in amazement at her beauty. There she builds a hut of green branches, which she garlands and tapestries with flowers.

Count Guarin, hearing that Nicolette has disappeared, releases his son, and holds a great festival in the hope of diverting his thoughts. But Aucassin, without his Nicolette, is deaf to all merry music, and blind to all gay sights. He rides away disconsolate to seek some solace under the greenwood trees, and finds the shepherds by the fountain—their cloth laid on the grass—singing and dancing. On receiving from one of them the message left for him by Nicolette, he spurs his steed and dashes into the heart of the wood, heedless that he is tearing his dress to pieces and covering himself with blood, as he forces his way 'thorough bush and thorough briar.' At last he discovers the bower which Nicolette has made. My Nicolette has been here, he thinks, and dismounts. But, dreaming of Nicolette, he descends so carelessly as to allow himself to be thrown against a stone, thereby dislocating his shoulder. Presently, Nicolette, who was not far distant, enters the arbour, and beholds her lover!

When the first rejoicings at such a happy meeting were over, Aucassin began to be conscious of his hurt, to which love and joy had hitherto rendered him insensible. Nicolette, brave and skilful, sets the bone, applies bandages of herbs, and ere long the knight is well. But they are not yet safe; so placing her before him upon his horse, he rides on till they come to the sea-shore. There they

see a merchant-vessel, in which they embark, and are carried by a storm to the harbour and castle of Torelore. After some adventures there of a comic nature, Aucassin and Nicolette are carried off in separate vessels by Moorish pirates, who surprise the castle. The ship in which Aucassin was placed is fortunately driven on to the French coast near his own city of Beaucaire. He escapes to land, finds that his father is dead, and amidst universal acclamation succeeds to his inheritance.

But the troubles of poor Nicolette are not yet ended. The vessel on board of which she found herself belonged to the King of Carthage. Arrived at the harbour, some of the objects around her seemed familiar—awoke dim remembrances—yes! the king is her father—and it was from Carthage that she had been taken, fifteen years ago, by the pirates who sold her to the Viscount of Beaucaire. The King of Carthage rejoices over his daughter, and is so bent on giving her in marriage to a potent Paynim prince, that Nicolette is compelled secretly to escape from the palace. She stains her face and hands, and assumes the habit of a minstrel. Taking ship, she finds her way to the coast of Provence, and finally reaches Beaucaire. There she sees Aucassin sitting on a flight of steps at the castle-foot, surrounded by his knights. He is enjoying the flowers, the sunshine, and the singing of the birds; but his countenance is sorrowful, and he sighs as he thinks of his true love Nicolette. Then the stranger minstrel at the foot of the stairs takes out his viol, and sings of the loves of Aucassin and Nicolette, how fond they were and true. Aucassin comes down and questions him apart. The minstrel engages to bring Nicolette away from Carthage within a week. This interval she employs in taking rest and removing all traces of her disguise. Beautiful as ever, and arrayed in rich attire, she sends a messenger for Aucassin. They embrace—they are happy—and true-hearted Nicolette becomes Countess of Beaucaire.

Let us turn now from the romance to the legend—from this tale which resembles an opera with a single actor, musical with

songs, breathing of sweet odours and the woodland nightingale, dwelling on sunny nature and every form of visible beauty with all the fondness of the intense southern temperament, alternating passion with playfulness, and passing in a moment from mournfulness to mirth—let us turn from the loves of Aucassin and Nicolette to the friendship of Amis and Amile, saints and brothers-in-arms, the Orestes and Pylades of the Middle Age. Some of our readers may be acquainted with one form of the story which is to be found in Ellis's *Early English Metrical Romances.* In the English romance, a Duke of Lombardy takes the place of Charlemagne, and the Pope does not appear as in the French relation. But there are no material differences in the incidents or spirit of the story, which is an ennobling memorial of knightly truth, of pious obedience, and inextinguishable gratitude.

Amis and Amile were born on the same day—the one in Burgundy, the other in Germany. Their fathers met in Italy, on their way to Rome; and the two children, between whom a remarkable resemblance was discernible, were baptized together by the Pope himself, who presented them with two golden cups, exactly alike. As they grew up toward manhood, they felt impelled, about the same time, each to set forth in search of the other. After a search of two years, they met at Paris, and swore perpetual brotherhood. Charlemagne made Amis his treasurer, and Amile his seneschal. At length Amis, who was married, left Amile at Paris, to return to his wife. Amile, forgetting the good advice of his friend, becomes entangled in a love affair with the Emperor's daughter—is accused accordingly by Ardré, his enemy, and a day appointed for the ordeal by battle. As the time approaches, Amile becomes conscience-stricken at the thought of an appeal to heaven in behalf of a falsehood. Will not 'sinful heart make feeble hand?' In this strait, Amis comes forward to take his place. Their resemblance is complete; and Amis can swear with a good conscience that he has never loved Belisant. The wicked Ardré falls beneath his sword, and the grateful Emperor gives his daughter's hand and the lord-

ship of a city to the champion who has vindicated her fame. The friends now change places once more, Amile setting out with his bride to take possession of his command, and Amis returning to his wife.

Ere long, it pleased Heaven to visit Amis with leprosy. Then his wife began to hate, and attempted, more than once, to strangle him. He was driven away, and wandered in utmost wretchedness to Rome, attended only by two faithful followers. Forced thence again by a grievous famine, he requested Azones and Horatus to carry him to the castle of his old companion-in-arms, Amile. Arrived there, he sounds the leper's rattle before the gates. The charitable Amile orders them to carry out to him bread and meat, and his golden cup, filled with wine. It is discovered that the poor leper possesses one precisely similar, and so, in a few moments, Amile recognises the friend and benefactor who had delivered him from death, and won for him his wife. With tears and lamentations he embraces the miserable object, and he and Belisent, making him an inmate of their home, lavish upon him every care and kindness.

One night the angel Raphael appeared to the sufferer, and told him that he was commissioned at last to reward his patience by revealing to him the means of cure. He must tell his friend Amile, that if he will kill his two children, and anoint him with their blood, the leprosy will depart. Amis protests in vain. There is no other way. Sorrowfully he communicates the divine message to his friend, who is at first incredulous. When assured that such is indeed the way pointed out by Heaven, his faith and friendship rise superior to his parental love.

'Did not Amis,' he asks himself, 'appear before the king, and encounter death in my stead? And shall I refuse to yield him up my children? He kept faith even to the death for me; should not I for him? Abraham was saved by faith, and by faith did the saints subdue kingdoms. And God saith in the Gospel, 'What-

soever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.'

Then, without more delay, he went into his wife's room, and bade her go to church and pray. When she was gone, he took his sword, and approached the bed where his two children lay asleep. Leaning over them, he began to weep bitterly, saying—'Was there ever father that willingly slew his own children? Alas, my children, I shall be no more a father, but a cruel murderer!'.

And the children, feeling their father's tears dropping on them, awoke, and looking up in his face, began to smile. They were about three years old, adds the tale.

'Your laughing will be turned into weeping,' said the father, 'for presently must your innocent blood be shed.'

So saying, he cut off their heads, and then replaced them on the pillow, covering the bodies over as though they were still lying asleep. Then, with the blood he had collected, he anointed his friend, who recovered by miracle in a moment. The two friends repair immediately to the church, to render their thanksgivings. Belisant, little thinking at what a price the cure has been attained, unites with joyful surprise in their expressions of gratitude. When they returned home the Count was full of heaviness, thinking of his dead children. So the mother ordered them to be sent for, that they might divert him with their play.

'Let them sleep on,' said he, and then went up into the room alone to weep over them. He found them playing on the bed, and round the neck of each, where the heads had been severed, a mark like a crimson thread!

The Story of the Emperor Constant, concise and animated in style, is partly oriental, partly classical, in its material, introducing us to the parents of Constantine, with the usual anachronisms of romance, and giving us a Mussulman Emperor some three hundred years before the birth of Mahomet.

The Paynim Emperor Muselin is wandering one night, with a

few of his courtiers, through the streets of Byzantium, quite in the style of Haroun Alraschid, when he hears a man in a balcony praying aloud, now that his wife may not, and now that she may, be brought through her maternal troubles.

'A strange prayer,' observes the Emperor. 'Surely every man should feel only compassion at such a time. By Mahound and Termagaunt, if the fellow cannot render me good reason I'll have him hung.'

On being questioned, the husband replies, that his acquaintance with astrology has made him aware that if the child should be born at a certain moment, it would be some day either hanged or drowned; if at another, the boy would hereafter marry the Emperor's daughter, and become Emperor himself. For this reason he had prayed at one time for a hastening, at another for the delay of his son's birth. Happily the infant had seen the light at the favourable moment, and would one day wed the daughter of the great Muselin.

'Villain, never!' exclaims the Emperor.

The next day, Muselin sent a knight to bring the child away secretly, and having received it, rips it up, and is about to pluck out its heart, when the knight stays his hand, promising to carry it away and drown it. Moved with pity, however, he leaves it wrapt in a silken mantle at the door of a monastery. The abbot takes it in, and rears it, baptizing it by the name of Coûtant (Coustant, Constant) because its cure was so expensive.

Fifteen years later, the abbot having occasion to seek an interview with the Emperor, was accompanied by the foundling, now become a handsome youth. Muselin, struck with his appearance, inquires who he is, and discovers from the account of the abbot that young Constant must be the very boy whom he had thought to slay. He takes him into his service, and then considers about the best method of making away with him. A war is raging on his frontier, and he causes Constant to accompany him to the scene of action. From thence he sends him back with a sealed letter to the governor of

Byzantium, containing orders to put the bearer immediately to death. On his arrival, Constant found the governor at dinner, so while waiting for an audience he turned his horse loose in the pleasure grounds of the palace, and himself reclining under the welcome shade of an arbour, fell fast asleep.

The beautiful daughter of the Emperor, walking in the garden, sees the sleeper, and thinks him the handsomest young man she has ever beheld. Curious to know the nature of his message, she takes out and opens the despatch he carries at his side; horrified at its contents, she thinks only of how to save so comely a youth from the fate awaiting him. She substitutes for the letter he bears, another, duly provided with the imperial seal (her father, it appears, had left a blank order in her hands), and in this epistle the governor is ordered, not to kill the bearer, but to marry him to the princess. When the exchange has been effected, she and her companion awaken Constant, and conduct him to the governor. The princess pretends great astonishment at the contents of the letter, and at first refuses compliance. The governor reminds her that the Emperor must be strictly obeyed. At last she agrees that he shall call a council of the barons and chief men of the country and ask their advice. If they approve of the marriage she will no longer withhold her consent. These counsellors, as might be expected, recommended compliance with the imperial command, and the fortunate youth marries the Emperor's beautiful daughter. The nuptial festivities lasted fifteen days, and all Byzantium did nothing but eat, drink, and make merry. Great was the astonishment of the Emperor Muselin when, on his return, he discovered what had taken place. His designs were frustrated—the past could not be undone—there was nothing for it but to accept the son-in-law provided for him by an inevitable destiny. Constant finally succeeds to his throne, converts his wife to Christianity, and they have a son named Constantine, in honour of whom the city of Byzantium was afterwards called Constantinople.

A story somewhat similar to this is to be found in the *Gesta Romanorum*, about the son of a forester, whom an emperor attempted

to kill in the same manner. In the story of the *Gesta*, an old knight, with whom the youth lodges, reads his fatal despatch, and substitutes for it an order to marry him at once to a daughter of the Emperor.

The last of our five stories—*The Countess of Ponthieu: a Tale of Beyond Seas*—was a great favourite in the eighteenth century. The most characteristic creations of the Middle Age could not attract the patronage of a period to which mediæval literature appeared only barbaric, superstitious, and incomprehensible. The *Countess of Ponthieu* was relished because it had less of simplicity and vigour, and approached more nearly the modern order of romance. It is amusing to see how the age of wigs, and lace, and high-heeled shoes evinces its partiality for a tale of the crusades. M. de la Place perpetrated a solemn caricature of the old romance under the name of a Tragedy in Five Acts. It was made the basis of a novel by de Vignacourt; and Madame de Gomez expanded it into a romance. As a five-act opera, by Saint-Marc, the *Countess* enjoyed a brilliant success in 1771.

A certain Count of Ponthieu gave his daughter in marriage to a brave knight, named Thiebaut de Donmart. For five years the knight and his wife lived happily together, but without having any offspring. Hoping that an heir might be vouchsafed in answer to his prayers, Thiebaut resolved on a pilgrimage to St. Jago, and his wife entreated and obtained permission to accompany him. On their journey the knight was one day slowly riding, unarmed, with his lady through a forest, having sent his men a little way on in advance. They lost their way among the trees, and found themselves presently surrounded by eight robbers, armed to the teeth. Thiebaut avoids the onset of the first, snatches away his weapon, strikes him down, and kills the two next who assail him, but is at last overpowered, stripped, and flung, bound hand and foot, into a thornbrake. The robbers, furious at their loss, carry off his wife, on whom they determine to revenge themselves. When released, she finds her way back to her husband, who entreats her to take the

sword of one of the slain men and cut the cords which bind him. She, in a frenzy of shame, perhaps dreading future reproaches on his part, takes the weapon, and strikes at him a blow which she meant to be fatal. Thiebaut, seeing her purpose, rolled himself over with a mighty effort, and the blade fell on the strongest of his bonds, so that with one more struggle he sprang up, free.

'My lady!' cried he, 'please God you will not slay me to-day.'

'Sir,' replied she, 'I am sorry not to have done so.'

Rejoining their attendants, he treats his wife with undiminished courtesy, but leaves her at a convent while he completes his journey. On his return, he takes her back with him to France—is gentle and forbearing towards her, but upon his guard.

During the festival which celebrated their return, the Count of Ponthieu asked Thiebaut to entertain him with some adventure which he had met with or heard of on his way. The knight can think of nothing but this very adventure with the robbers, which he relates as though it had happened to some other travellers. So strange a story excites the curiosity of the Count, who insists on knowing the names of those to whom it happened. Thiebaut finds himself compelled to tell him the truth. The wife of Thiebaut, when charged by her father with her crime, not only avows it, but expresses her regret that she had not been able to kill her lord upon the spot.

The Count, horror-stricken to find himself the father of such a monster, resolved on a terrible punishment. He caused a ship to be prepared, in which he embarked with his young son, his daughter, and her husband. When some distance out at sea, a large tun or hogshead was brought up, in which he ordered his daughter to be enclosed, and thrown into the sea, in spite of the intercession and the tears of her husband and her brother.

But our Lord Jesus Christ, says the old storyteller, who is sovereign father of all, and desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn and live—as He showeth us plainly every day

by His works, by examples, and by miracles—sent the lady succour, as you shall hear.

She was picked up, almost dead, by a Flemish merchant vessel, trading with Morocco. When she came to herself, and found that she was among Christian men, she felt exceeding thankful and penitent, and desired greatly to amend her life, and feared sorely because of the sins she had committed, both against God and man.

The Flemings presented her to the Sultan of Morocco, who persuaded her to turn Mahometan—made her his wife, and treated her with all the indulgence the fondest affection could suggest. She brought him a daughter and then a son.

Meanwhile, the Count of Ponthieu began to feel remorse for his severity towards his daughter—confessed himself, and took the cross to go beyond seas. Seeing this, the unhappy Thiebaut, and his devoted friend, the Count's son, become crusaders likewise, and accompany him to the Holy Land. After performing their vows, and serving a year with the Knights Templars, they embarked at Acre to return home. Their vessel was wrecked on the coast of Morocco, and they were thrown into a dungeon, where they lay long, half-starved, till the Count's son fell sick, nigh unto death.

The next incident of the story we give in the original, for the sake of those who may be curious to see the old Picard French of the thirteenth century:—

'Après avint que li Soudans tint court molt efforcie et fist grant joie del jour de sa nativité. Et ensi estoit li coustume as Sarrazins: après mangier vinrent li Sarrazin au Soudant et li disent:—Sire, nos vous requerons nostre droit. Et il lor demanda que c'estoit. Et il li disent:—Sire, un caitif crestien por mettre au biersel. Et lor otria, car il ne l'en estoit gaires, et lor dist:—Alés à la chartre et prenés celui ki mains puet vivre. Il alèrent à la chartre et en traisent le Conte cargié de barbe velue. Et quant li Soudans le vit en si povre estat, si lor dist:—Cis n'avoit mestier de plus vivre; alés, menés l'ent, et en faites vostre volenté. La feme au Soudant, dont vous avés oï ki estoit fille au Conte, estoit en la place ù on

amena le Conte, qui estoit ses pères, por ocirre. Et luès qu'ele l'ot veu, si li mua li sans et li cuers, ne mie por tant k'ele le conneust fors tant que nature l'en destraignoit. Lors dist la Dame au Soudant:—Sire, je sui Françoise, si parleroie volentiers à icel povre home ainçois que il morust, s'il vous plaisoit.—Dame, fait li Soudans, oill, bien me plaist. La Dame vint au Conte, et le traist d'une part, et fist les Sarrazins traire arrière, et li demanda dont il estoit, et il dist:—Dame, je sui del royaume de France, d'une terre c'on apiele Pontiu. Quant li Dame oï chou, si li mua toz li sans. Errammentli demanda de quel gent il estoit.—Certes, Dame, fait il, il ne me puet gaires caloir de quel gent je soie, car j'ai tant soufiert de paines et d'angoisses puis que je m'en parti que je aime mius à morir k'à vivre. Mais tant vos dis jou bien por voir que j'estoie quens de Pontiu. Quant la Dame oï chou, nul samblant n'en fist. Elle se parti luès dou Conte, et vint au Soudant et li dist:—Sire, donnés moi cel caitif, s'il vous plaist, car il sait des ekiés et des tables, et des biaus contes qui molt vos plairont, et si juera devant vos et vos aprendra.—Dame, fait li Soudans, par ma loi, sachiés que je volentiers le vous donrai; faites ent vostre volenté. Lors le prist la Dame et l'envoia en sa chambre.'—pp. 199–202.

'After this it so happened that the Sultan held full court, and made great rejoicings on account of his birthday. Now this was the custom of the Saracens: after dinner they came to the Sultan and said—'Sire, we have come to ask of you our privilege.' He asked them what that was, and they said—'Sire, a captive Christian to set up as a mark to shoot at.' And he granted their request—for he thought it a mere trifle—saying—'Go to the prison and take out the one that is likely to die soonest.' They went to the prison and drew out the Count covered with a shaggy beard. And when the Sultan beheld him in such poor case, he said to them—'This one cannot live much longer; take him hence, and do as you like with him.' The wife of the Sultan, who, as you have heard, was the Count's daughter, was in the place to which they

brought the Count, her father, to kill him. And as soon as she saw him, her heart and blood were stirred,—not that she recognised him, except as natural instinct constrained her. Then said the lady to the Sultan—'Sire, I am a Frenchwoman, and I would gladly speak to this poor man before he dies, if you please.' 'Lady,' quoth the Sultan, 'Yes, I am very willing.' The lady then approached the Count, took him apart, and making the Saracens withdraw behind them, asked whence he came. And he said, 'Lady, I am from the kingdom of France, from a country they call Ponthieu.' When the lady heard that, all her blood was stirred. Immediately she inquired of what rank he was. 'Verily, lady,' quoth he, 'it can be small matter to me what rank I am of, for I have suffered so much pain and distress since I left home, that I would sooner die than live. But nevertheless, I tell you the truth when I say that I was Count of Ponthieu.' When the lady heard that, she did not allow her feelings to appear, but quitting the Count straightway, came up to the Sultan, and said—'Sire, give me this prisoner, if you please; for he understands chess and tric-trac, and knows good stories that will please you much, and will play before you, and teach you.' 'Lady,' quoth the Sultan, 'by my law, be assured I give him you willingly; do with him what you please.' Then the lady took him and sent him to her chamber.'

The gaolers next bring out Thiebaut, for whom she asks in like manner; and then her brother, whom she also obtains. 'If there were a hundred,' says the good-natured Sultan, 'you should have them, with all my heart.' When by great care, and the very gradual administration of food, the three captives are restored to health, she asks the Count if he had not a daughter, and what has become of her. He tells her truly the sad story, and says he regards their late sufferings as the punishment of his cruelty.

'And what should you say if you heard that your daughter was living?'

The father, the husband, and the brother, alike protest that nothing in this world could make them so happy. Then she dis-

covers herself to them. By the advice of his wife, the Sultan intrusts Thiebaut with horse and arms, and by his help vanquishes a formidable adversary who had invaded his kingdom. At last the lady, pretending illness, and assuring the Sultan that only her native air can recover her, is allowed to embark, with her infant son, taking Thiebaut and the other two as her escort. At Brundisium they send back the Moorish mariners, with a polite message to the Sultan; not without some little compunction on the part of the lady for the deception she has practised. Having obtained absolution for all their sins from the Pope at Rome, they return in safety to Ponthieu, where they live long and happily. The Sultan's daughter by the Countess is married to the mighty King Malakin, and gives birth to a daughter, of whom was born 'that courteous Turk Saladin, so gallant, victorious, and wise.'

The philologist will observe with interest, in the old French of the foregoing tales, fragmentary remains of the Latin declensions. Thus the addition of *s* marks the nominative singular, and its absence indicates the oblique cases. In the plural, on the contrary, the *s* is absent in the nominative, and present in the oblique cases. Thus we know that the sentence,—*Il sot que son père ot li rois pendu*, means, 'He knew that the king had hung his father,' and not the reverse, by the presence of the *s* in *rois*, and its absence in *père*. So, again, the nominatives, *consans*, *cevans*, *Dex*, *enperères*, *jonglères*, *Charles*, *Raous*, *enfes*, *homs*, have in the oblique cases, respectively, *consel*, *ceval*, *Dieu* or *Diu*, *empereour*, *jongleor*, *Charle* or *Chaleon*, *Raoul*, *enfant*, *home*. The following nominatives plural, for example, are without the *s*,— *Armé furent li chevalier*, and *ce que vos volez*, *que li home vos facent:* while the oblique cases in the plural have it, e.g., *Et ocioit ses homes; Il ot molt de chevaliers avoec lui; Dex qui comandas as homes.*

For any farther details of this kind we must refer the reader to the excellent introduction of MM. Moland and d'Héricault, who have treated both the grammatical and the literary parts of their subject with like good sense and ability.

Miscellaneous Papers,

FRAGMENTS OF CRITICISM,

THOUGHTS ON RELIGION,

AND

POETRY.

SECTION I.

Miscellaneous Papers.

THE DREAM OF PHILO.

PHILO, the Hebrew Philosopher of Alexandria, did much to bring about that mixture of sacred and profane literature which became conspicuous in the later history of Neo-Platonism. His speculations, borrowed one-half from Jerusalem, and the other half from Athens, wear a strange aspect to the uninitiated in such matters in our time. But they have their place in the history of thought, and are not without their uses even now. The piece below, intitled 'The Dream of Philo,' was written off by my son during one of his lonely evenings at Halle, when human existence, so perplexing to Philo, had become a distressing enigma to his own mind. It is such a vision of the history and condition of humanity as Philo's discoursings in the day might well have reproduced in the sleeping hours of the night. The conclusion is gloomy—terrible; but it is such as Philo might have described, and such as had too much influence at the time on the mind of the writer. The reader will find in this fragment, if I mistake not, a singular richness of imagination and expression.—EDITOR.

A DAY of labour had nearly reached its close. My scholars, with whom I cannot live, and yet who are ever alternately gratifying and disappointing me, had been dismissed. I sat down in the garden of the Museum. A distant hum of the many sounds from either side, —from the harbour and from the city—and the quiet breath of the summer evening, invited me to repose. Sleep overcame me; and the truths, some of which I had been that day imparting, and the investigation of which has formed the toil and pleasure of my life, appeared in that sleep.

Methought I was suddenly placed in the midst of space—poised as in the centre of a dark undefined void. But presently I saw that on either side of me stood a form of surpassing dignity. Neither shape nor feature could I distinctly recognise, but a something within told me who were these divine companions. On my right stood Moses—the Plato of our nation; on the left, Plato—the Moses of Greece. The former addressed me, and said:—'Wait, favoured one, and thou shalt behold that which hath been. Let the eye look—let the ear listen—and learn thou these lessons. Thy toil hath not been in vain, neither thy many earnest thoughts. For thee shall the Isis-veil of the past be uplifted. Thou shalt behold a re-enacted shadowing of what God hath done, and behold the birth-time of creation and of sin—the brethren—one but so short a space the elder, now servant unto him who came forth second.'

I bowed my head, for I could not trust myself to speaking right words. I kissed the hem of the garment that seemed woven of silver light. I arose and stood waiting. Long the darkness remained even as it was. Plato looked towards his brother spirit, and said, 'Shall it not be now as after those words 'Let there be light'?' Scarcely had he spoken when I saw before me, but afar off, the kingdom of light—perfect, as it is and will be ever—formed, and kindled, and bounded without a sound. The Infinite—the Marvellous, He who is bounded by nothing, and hath contact with nothing, who stands in need of nothing, and to whom nought is like, He of whom none can say what He is—the without distinction, or part, or change—unbegun, unending—had rayed out from Himself the light circle of glory. The Word was. In the inmost insufferable brightness of the vast realm, methought I beheld the Word; and His majesty and brightness rayed from thence to the utmost round of the outer fiery circle, which, heaving and streaming in waves of flashing fire, undulated in its stupendous round, the outskirts of the region of glory. Many saw I who seemed to be throned powers and principalities, of an undimmed lustre; but beyond all shone that Word, destined to

fashion and to foster the All. And straightway He, the Divine reason, the second God—God, though not *the* God—of all Thoughts the highest Thought—entered on the work of the worlds. He moved from his throne, and passed through the bright ranks of the bowing and wondering ones, who each as he had passed arose and followed, and the harmonies that rose up from the moving multitude made the first music. The Word now stood upon the verge, and about his feet played the utmost surges of the light, casting off, ever and anon, their sparkles of fiery foam, which were lost in the darkness beyond. He looked down into the depths, and abroad over the width of the chaos. Beneath lay and moved that which should have been solid and liquid, heat and cold, but as yet was only motion—the changing and yet the same—of which no part *was* more than another, but all about to be. He stretched forth His arms over the abyss. This was the sign for the sundering of the unlike. In the parting, each kind first became itself. There seemed a shadowy moving of a rising promontory that went up as the steam from the seething waste, and a rushing of the moist from the dry, and of the liquid from the solid; but the parting was without order and light—no rest, but everywhere the fleeing, and driving, and pressure. Then He pressed together the extended hands, and immediately like flew to its kindred like, and there was a gathering of waters, and a gathering of earth and all solids, and the seas unfolded themselves like broad blue veils over the collected hardnesses, and above hung the film of firmaments like their shadow reflected in the upper air. So far could I see in the dimness, and methought I beheld somewhat like a huge plain which might be hereafter our earth.

And now, turning to the hosts who had been spectators of this working, He singled out one who straightway disappeared from among his fellows. Then another, and then a multitude of others. And there was a pause in the sweet sounds above; and the rude sounds below had also ceased. For a long silence did the waiting universe abide, as it were, drawing breath after this throe that made the beginning.

At length there seemed to open on the dim noiseless waste of our world an eye full of glory and hope. It was the sun—glorious comer forth from the light-realm—untiring spirit—the angelic beneficence who in that orbed form showers light upon the head of man. And opposite, trembling, rose the pale, silver-veiled bride, the moon, and the waters on the one side became gold, and on the other silver; and upon the waste there was the evening land and the morning land. And these two looked from one to the other with gazes of their first and eternal love, standing as at the head and at the feet of their unconscious child, the world. I looked upon that which lay there between the two heavenly ones, and behold the Word had called forth the green thing upon it, and the fruitful trees and the enamelling of the flowers; and there were hills with vines, and forests with their continents of leaves, and in the valleys groves of olive, and pomegranate, and palm, and among the mountain-tops and passes cedar and pines, and all were for that child a coat of many colours. And I saw the waves lifting their hands in their first salutation, and the leaves with their moving lips whispering morning wishes, and the rocks, some with bowed heads in revering, and others with bare broad breasts in confiding; all hailing the friendship of the light and the warmth.

But not these two only had left the region of lustre to become watchers earthwards. I saw unfolding the buds of the starry garden, and each star was a mighty spirit. Glorious flowers that drop the gold dust of their light down hither from their heaven-filled cups, and from whom our soaring evening thoughts gather sweetest honey—how fairly do they bloom upon their heavenly steeps near to the airs of the world above! And underneath them, between them and their golden network of light, and our earth as the floor of the cage, hovered other and many-winged forms, the spirits of the air.

I looked yet farther, and I saw moving many bright and busy shapes about the earth, in the distance, like the fireflies among trees, or the torch-dance of a Grecian festival: they seemed to flit among

the heights and deeps, and over the plains of earth; these were sparks of the divine light; these were human souls, which the Word, as he looked down, almighty and all-loving, had caused to come lovingly from above upon the earth. But there seemed a want of fitness between the people and the world. The beauties of earth they seemed to enjoy; but yet such different natures could have content but in some few points. While I wondered, I heard the Word say, 'It is not good for man that he should be alone.' And then these radiant beings were all still. And about each a haze gathered itself, which rendered them no longer so bright. Now was the Word giving to man's soul its fine beautiful garments. The body with its senses was given for companion and helpmeet to the soul.

Sight—with its keen, countless, invisible arrow, that brings down prey for the thought within, from the distant and the near; that opens the leaves of Nature's beautiful book, and brings to him the mirror wherein he sees himself, even the face of his friend and fellow-man; that enables him to lay up in his heart the love-tokens of the sun, and the moon, and the stars—ever grateful thoughts—for seeing them he knows that they love him. This the Word gave man with its *pleasure*.

Hearing—so that the loving words of those dear to him he wears as a golden ornament, and with their wise words clothes him as with a breastplate; that lets him know how the wind plays upon the sea as on a harp, and the assembly of the trees shouts its oration, or among the reeds hath its moaning soliloquy; which opens to him the country of sweet sounds which man's art has so richly tilled, and adorned with such stately and winning architecture of melody, where the pæan raises its city and tower towards heaven, and the Dorian flute is as the peace and love of cottages. This, also, he gave him with its *pleasure*.

Smell—which enables him to hear the flowers talk, and brings him messages of sweetness by swift winds, and suffers him to bring yet another sense into the worship of Jehovah, and makes the

frankincense speak of the house of the Lord. This, too, he gave him with its *pleasure.*

Taste—that king in whose name he exercises lordship over all—plucking the fruits and slaying the beasts of the earth for his food. This, also, he gave him with its *pleasure.*

Touch—whereby he knows more surely of things around him; that added witness to the testimony of the eye, that by another mouth his surety concerning things external may be established; whereby he feels the pressure of the hand of love, and hath the inmost interpretation of endearment. This, too, he gave him with its *pleasure.*

I saw how of this union of the immortal radiance with the material body, *Pleasure* is the link. The benevolent Creator in joining these two caused that each with joy in the other should clasp the hand of a friendship that was Life. In pleasure was the body wedded to the soul. Oh, Pleasure, merciful yet fatal gift, thou art the source of all our sorrow! Thou hast celebrated a marriage begun with smiles, now endured with tears and reproaches throughout all time. Earthly body—false fair bride of thy nobler bridegroom!—in an evil hour camest thou with thy enticements. Thy lost ruined partner hates now the chamberlain Pleasure that placed thee by his side. Thou art of the earth, he is from heaven. Thy rose-wreaths first hindered his wings—now he hath lost them—now thy garlands are chains of iron. Now he is only less sad when he can forget thee; he will never be truly happy till he shall part from thee. He would remember what he was, but thou givest him of Lethe to drink. His thoughts would fly heavenward, but thou pluckest them back with thy silken thread.

These thoughts passed through my mind as I saw the sumptuous garment put on, and the revelry of nature that made the marriage procession of this hapless union. Soon the goodness of God was abused. I saw, as a few years appeared to have passed, that Pleasure had brought in Sin, and that now man was a fallen creature—the flesh the sinful prison, the soul the captive struggling divinity.

And now we moved downwards nearer to the earth, and I saw men, the busy ants, upon their hill, in their toiling and their resting, their enjoyment and their sorrow. I beheld them in the development of their civilization, in the course of their history, as the years seemed rapidly to pass over their heads. I could see better than while on earth the struggle between the body and the soul. The walls of the house were transparent. In some the nobler part lay as in a drunken slumber; in others he had his fits of alarm, and seemed to shake the doors which he could not open, but soon resigned himself again to repose. The life of a few was a constant series of such struggles, and when more successful, the soul seemed every moment about to succeed in effecting his escape, but he was never truly free till the prison-house had been laid in ruins by death. To return to the lost supremacy, the soul must subdue the body—must rebel against the impost it demanded—must banish Pleasure and her evil counsellors; but, alas! now all nature had become her counsellors. All the material, all the visible, was on the side of the body; and the soul, the good in the world of the evil—the holy and spiritual particle amid the cloud of foul and sinful matter, was alone and enfeebled. Some, in the life of the ascetic, in retirement from the world, in temperance, in continence, wasted down the body and arose in contemplation to the heavenly and ante-natal home. But few aspired to this. Many, however, we saw somewhat awake to the higher origin of their spiritual part, and with them the conflict was so grievous, so piteous to behold, that I could not refrain from tears. I saw them groaning under a burden which yet they could not lessen. Habit had the stronghold; conviction could only assault, and for a moment carry it, to be expelled the next moment with ignominy. Under the spear of sense, a thousand resolves were sold to slavery in the very vigour of their youth. After each relapse into pleasure, the soul resolved it should be the last; and so wonderful was the infatuation, that after the expectation had been again and again shown to be false, it was no less ardently cherished. Years went on, and the same alternation con-

tinued. Each sin was only a sin once more—each sin was followed by a resolve that it should be no more. Often, after the soul had made its firmest resolve, the body would hurry it into the most flagrant violation of it, and triumphantly prove its own supremacy, even when its antagonist had seemed at last justly confident of victory. Self-contempt and anguish, tears and groans, were mocked, and increased in tenfold painfulness by the signs of the powerlessness that were almost immediately made manifest. The firm purpose with great torture succeeded for a time in destroying the evil; but the chained Prometheus found it reformed before the sun had risen. Life passed away: every joy was lessened, every sorrow doubled, by the misery of this living death—by this battle of endless defeats—and yet its history at the end was even as at the beginning. Oh, hateful body! how many a hard struggle after knowledge did I see it make vain, the prize all but won; how many thoughts of the wise did it render foolish; how many plans of the good, hurtful; how many fair purposes did I see it wither; how many who would have been benevolent, to serve it became selfish; how many who would have done noble things, to serve it became as the brutes that perish! Looking through it, man sees nothing clear in nature—nothing rightly—all as some bygone characters written by a former race, and now not to be read; it makes the vile look full of honour, and the things most hurtful loved even unto death. The living and the dead are bound face to face. We must suffer to deny it—we must suffer more to obey it. It is the serpent that tempts and devours us. Let no man say he despises it, for then its victory is at hand. Let a man say he fights against it—he unfolds his deepest sorrow and his highest glory. Let a man say he is overcome by it—let us pity, but not contemn him, for it has overcome the world—it *is* the world: the flesh is the victor that stands over our fallen race, and reaches its giant hand upwards to shut the door of our return.

What I have here said is what I saw exemplified in the multitude of existences whose history I was enabled at a glance to understand. The last sight I saw was one whose whole past life had been spent

in this conflict—who had hated his body, and yet by the body been overcome, constantly and finally. He moved about among his fellows, his own scorn, and as he felt deservedly theirs. They scorned him not; they thought him even one of themselves. He knew he should have been far other—that he had a soul within him with which it was once far otherwise; and his life was a longing after the golden age, but a crushing down under the iron one. I saw the anguish of his soul awake him at midnight. I saw the sorrow at his heart daily. I saw every fresh season witness fresh resolves and fresh failures. At every lengthened review of what had been, he was torn by remorse; he writhed, he rolled in the dust in the agony of his spirit, the hot tears ran from his eyes; he raised his hands toward heaven, the lost home, for some help from thence; he looked round on the earth, and every inanimate thing told him of the guilt of this unmastered body, and called him vile, that so unnaturally he had sold his higher birthright; he longed to have been made one of the cattle of the earth, that at least he might not have been worse than his kind; he caught at the slightest aid that promised alleviation; he tried a thousand modes, but the body was conqueror, and conquered till the hour of death; in that hour his tortures were those of hell; he had had his foretastes of hell on earth. In this last hour, his body was here, his soul there; he called on the Jehovah to whom he had all his life earnestly, sincerely prayed, and against whom he had all his life sinned, but it was all in vain, it was all in vain!

Such was my horror at this spectacle, that I awoke from my dream, trembling in every limb. I looked around; the stars were up in heaven, and the moon shepherding the flock—they so peaceful, above all mortal care, but I, here in this body, doomed to pain, encompassed by it with dangers every hour, not sure for a moment of my victory over it; and I sorrowed that I had come back to the world—that I had not died while I dreamed. I resolved that henceforth I would give myself more than ever to fasting, to solitude, to meditation, and to prayer.

[*Written the night of October 29th, 1846. Halle.*]

Eight years had passed since 'The Dream of Philo' was written, when the following Address was delivered. The reader will feel, as he peruses it, that he has passed into another region. The disturbed thought of the autumn of 1846 had given place long since to settled Christian faith and hope.—EDITOR.

AN ADDRESS TO DIVINITY STUDENTS ON LEAVING COLLEGE. (1854.)

I HAVE been requested to convey to you this evening, on the part of your esteemed Tutors, of the Ministers and Christian friends who cherish for you, and for the Institution in which you have been trained, so deep an interest, the expression of the affectionate regard in which they hold you, of the hopeful solicitude with which we all shall watch your future career, of the thankful, prayerful anticipations with which we now bid you God speed. Long may life and health be yours—the heart for labour and the hand for it! This is for you our hope and our entreaty—that into whatsoever neighbourhood you may enter, all good men may hail with joy in your arrival the coming up of strong reinforcements for the light against the darkness, that your work, wheresoever done, may be such as to put a fresh heart of confidence and enterprise into all the children of the Day, and to strengthen by the added force of so much more devoted life and hallowed energy the hands of all who seek the glory of the King of saints.

Hitherto you have been mainly occupied with acquisition. Production has formed (and very properly) but a small portion as yet of your employment. The most vigorous powers must be disciplined, the largest capacities informed (and the larger the more needful such lading—if only as so much ballast) before it is either safe or seemly that they assume the guidance of other minds. Up to this time you have mostly employed that far-travelling merchant studious Research, and what he has brought you home has been entered and arranged compactly by your steward Order, and over all you have set the warden Memory. But now you must put in requisition continually the skill of another servant, called com-

monly the Distributive or Explanatory Faculty. This is the wise householder who brings forth from his storehouse, for those who tarry at his gate, things new and old. As before you studied to epitomise and compress, to lay up truth in its technical order, its most exact expression, its smallest possible compass, so now your endeavour must be to reverse the process, to make the implicit explicit—not merely to fold up truth for yourself, but to unfold it for others, to spread out the tissue in the sunshine that the celestial dyes of it may glisten, to commend with your most winning words those priceless wares which you are commissioned to press on the acceptance of your fellow-men.

These two species of intellectual effort, this power of generalization and this mastery of detail, this inspiration and this expiration, this contractive and this expansive function, though apparently opposed, are alike indispensable to mental completeness, even to healthy mental action. In this respect your position is most happy. By good husbandry of time you will cultivate, to the end of your days, facility in either kind. The noblest of all aims of life is before you—self-culture beneath the hand of God for the good of your fellows. Be thankful that your solemn duties forbid in your case all secluded and selfish indulgence in mere literature or mere scholarship, that duty rescues you for ever from the morbid fastidiousness and the desultory trifling of the intellectual miser who will know all and produce nothing, whose very learning and whose very taste are a child's play rather than a man's work. Be thankful, also, that the education you have received has placed at your disposal resources equal to the demand which will be made upon you, and that you are delivered, on the other side, from the unhappy condition of those who attempt to teach without knowledge, and whose whole life is an indolent artifice for giving to wordy ignorance the air of wisdom. Your sense of what is due to others will forbid your silence when you ought to speak; your sense of what is due to yourselves will command your silence when you have nothing to say. Look forward then to the gradual accomplishment of your-

selves by incessant practice in the grand art of making the difficult plain, of stating the largest and the deepest truths in language simple, clear, and strong. Cultivate to the utmost whatever readiness or agility of thought you may possess in the way of quick-witted invention, apt arrangement, welcome variety, illustration, homely or imaginative. Place this among your aims and prayers—that old familiar truth, in your hands, may have its youth perpetually renewed, may wear a human not a statue face, and, with expression ever changeful, be yet the same;—that the common verities of religion, so generally admitted and so generally unheeded, may, either by some new shifting of the light and shade, or linked in some unwonted fellowship, be seen with aspect so bright, so solemn, or so unlooked for, that even hurrying worldliness shall be fain to pause and turn aside to see the sight.

Now also you are about to have to do with men more constantly, on a larger scale, with heavier responsibilities, and more remote it may be from the wished-for counsel of an older head. In the stress of practical affairs, a multitude of new exigencies and minor difficulties of execution will arise about you, invisible at a distance, and for which the quiet life of College can do little to make you ready. You will not find that book of mankind neatly arranged for you like your lexicons and dictionaries. Sometimes it will seem a volume of hieroglyphics; often a confused and intricate character that must be laboriously spelt out; it is always a language abounding in anomalies. Far more easily extricable are your imbedded Hebrew roots than the real nature and purpose of many men concealed or disguised by the prefixes and affixes of profession or of form, of personal manner or of social usage. For the book of humanity every man must write out his own index with his own hand. Some have done it as in their heart's blood, and many have blotted the page with the vain tears of regret or those burning drops which flow from the indignant sense of wrong. But in this study, like every other, as you sow so will you reap. Two qualities above all are necessary—sympathy and self-control. You will never understand

men if you do not love them. You profess the healing science of religion. From the unsightliness of diseased humanity you should be the last to shrink. Look beneath the most repulsive exterior, and read with pity and awe the tragic history of the sinful soul; see how about that man, as about you, light and darkness have had their strife whether he live or die; mark what influences may have entered to stir the gall within him, to darken his light, to blunt his feeling, to lap him in self-delusion; seek out what better thoughts may yet survive, not carried away captive, in that nature almost depopulated of good, and strive by encouraging and multiplying these to colonize his wasted being anew from heaven. On such enterprise of hopeful love His smile will always rest who came himself to seek and to save that which was lost.

You leave, then, now the sheltering cliffs and piers of the harbour whose embrace has held you hitherto; you spread your sail and stretch away upon the sea of life. A prosperous voyage to you! May you bravely weather every storm; may you safely glide past every treacherous quicksand, every lurking rock; may you gladden with blessing every shore whereat you touch; and gloriously disembark at last upon the heavenly strand, exchanging there your priceless merchandise of faith for richer sight, your wealth of hope for full enjoyment evermore!

With regard to the immediate future, receive one word of exhortation before all others concerning the direction of the heart. Consider this the foundation and essential of your life's efficiency—that you make it your foremost aim, by every means and at any cost, to maintain and to augment your own spirituality in its benignant influence on every province of your action. Your prayers, your devout habitude, your heavenward aspiration, will be things unseen, but without them that which is seen of you will never become what it may be,—what it ought.

The books which work greatly among men were never written for the mere sake of making a book. The sermons which come

home to men's consciences were never produced because the imperious hour was at hand which must somehow be occupied with speech. Into what work soever which tells mightily upon the hearts and minds of men, something of the maker's inmost life has been always wrought. The reader, the auditor, the spectator, must often be ignorant of the cause which gives that work the influence he feels it has, simply because he is a stranger to its hidden history. The first dim surmise, the first stirrings of yearning ardour, the many failures and frequent loss of heart, the growing passion and hardening tenacity of veteran perseverance, the swaying and oscillation of the mind before its strength of wing is discovered and is trusted, the purifying influence of self-loss as the greatness of the purpose and the height of motive expand and rise within the soul, the process by which brooding thought fosters slowly and in darkness the formless into form—all this must be, and be for ever, unrevealed; but the successful result is what it is openly, because these things were what they were in secret. Such workmanship has power, and speaks from the heart and to the heart, as deep calleth unto deep, because it had this ante-natal being, and waited once, an archetype, in the inmost shrine of the workman's holiest self.; because at its best and greatest, it is but the partial inadequate expression of those primal conceptions; because there is so much beyond in the recesses whence it sprang that can never win full utterance.

Every man is more wonderful than his work. There is more greatness in the creative mind than in any of its creations. Of the large imaginations or the subtile fancies which haunted all the lifetime of some great poet, which trooped about his meditation, or sprang up under his feet, or shot down toward him from the clouds, you have but a small selection in his published works. You have but such thoughts as he deemed fittest for some especial purpose; multitudes were called, but few chosen. But because the whole native habit and gift of thought were such, therefore those portions of his being which arrived at expression are the choice

and wondrous things we find them. These fragments of his nature are the emerging mountain-tops that appear above time's flood, and had never met our eye were it not that the hidden bulk of the man, of which we know nothing, possessed dimensions so colossal.

What is true as to these more uncommon gifts holds good quite as much in the walk you have chosen. Give heed, then, not to effects merely, but mostly to the cause. Make good the tree, and the spoken fruit of the discourses growing thence will be likewise good. There must be more in you of conviction, of ardour, of love, as the essential element of your renewed nature, than can find full utterance at any one time by any outlet of language. Your sermons must be manifestations, necessarily partial, transitory, successive, of that great central glow of love to God and man which rules and burns within you—sparks thrown off—the bright offspring of that heart-flame which they represent but cannot all reveal, and which is fed from an unfailing cruise with the anointing oil of the Spirit. Let them be then the embodiment, the expression of your own inner life, so shall they kindle life. They are to build a bridge to span the stream of life whereon men may with more facility pass to and fro for their commerce with the unseen world. Your devout thoughts, and reverent studies, and secret prayers, are the great piles driven deep down into the river-bed, an arduous work, which the rushing current hides, but a concealed support without which the bridge must be swept away when against the quaking buttresses press the shoulders of some great flood.

But you are not monks. The contemplative life is not for you. You will find no leisure for the long relapse of saintly reverie, for meditations that lead to nothing, for structures in the air, whether towers or temples. You could not attempt if you would Loyola's plan for giving intensity to religious conviction, and seclude yourself for some couple of months on spare diet, to meditate for one week on the everlasting joy, for the next on the everlasting sorrow, for so long on the incarnation, and so long on the passion; till, having told your weeks like beads, and accomplished the tale of doctrine,

you should emerge made perfect in disdain of earth. You will find that about your vocation countless *avocations* have clustered themselves in growth of usage—often, alas! literally callings-away from your proper calling; and that real and inevitable duties of many kinds will break up, and well nigh pulverise, the substance of your time. Never more will you see before you any of those fair reaches of unhindered time for study which college years so liberally lent. You will find that work, of which you could once have been happily rid by a week or two of unbroken effort, must be protracted through a difficult and dismembered existence of months, till you are not only weary of it before it is done, but have almost forgotten why, when, or how, it was ever commenced. Whether then for your intellectual or your spiritual needs, you must learn how to hoard with more than a miser's jealousy the most contemptible fragments of your time. If you do not daily thus redeem it in detail, you will find on looking back that you have lost it in the mass. You, above all others, will need practically to understand the injunction of the laborious Paul,—'Pray without ceasing.' Necessity will forbid your identifying a devout spirit with protracted seasons of devotion. Happy will you be if you make your studies and your labours parts of your worship—if some of your busiest days are found also the most prayerful. It is not requisite for the acutest exercise of the intellect that the heart should be cold; neither is devotion a movement of the feeling only. Make your work a prayerful thing, and let your prayer be a perpetual action. Form the habit of throwing every holy feeling, every heavenward desire, at once upon the practical test of something to be done. Have no aimless waste emotions. Let every impulsive feeling be set to turn some wheel, to yield some product that shall abide,—witness and proof of its genuineness. This life of the heart will clear the eye of the intellect, and give the understanding to discern with a new instinct the point at which its labour may be most profitably applied. Thus you will not neglect careful study and the use of means on the plea of prayer (as though grace were the substitute rather than the stimulus of

effort), and, on the other side, you will expect nothing from the unblessed toil of the mere brain. So, at the same time, you will accomplish two most wished for ends—your prayer and study will be interwoven, and each will bless the other.

Again, as to the expectations you should cherish in entering on your work. Away with all day-dreams. Give no place for a moment to that morbid vanity which always fancies itself overlooked or unappreciated. Be sure that you will have to labour for success, and that, if you deserve it, success will sooner or later come. You seek no fallacious popularity, but a genuine usefulness. Be content then to pay the honest price of patient toil. You will be estimated by what you have done, not by what you say or imagine you might do. Of this no man should complain. Both to the world and to the church the time is wanting and the will to reckon up your unrealized possibilities, and to credit you with projects as performance.

But do not be too much discouraged should the good work seem at first to proceed less rapidly than your natural zeal would desire. There are those whose only estimate of spiritual prosperity would seem to be that which figures may furnish. By certain ready rules of arithmetic they will gauge you the religion of any community to a hairsbreadth. This operation of admeasurement is simple. It consists in asking always two questions:—First, How much do you raise for Foreign Missions? Secondly, How many members were added to the church during the past year? A trim reckoning truly, but exceeding shallow. The most dexterous counter practice with measure or with scales will not enable any man of business to mete off charity by the yard, or to weigh out piety by the pound. For this simple reason must such standards, taken alone, be always untrustworthy. Not in religion only, but on every other social question, the cold and calculating theorist who works sums with men as counters, and discerns only so much profit and loss, must continually miscalculate. The dabbler in political economy feels his way through his statistics and his tables to apparently infallible

conclusions, but he has not calculated the disturbing forces of this complex system, the friction of this breathing mechanism. He has forgotten that men have hearts beating with hope and fear—many interests, and not one only—that appearance and reality are mingled together in their vision—and that for the distant gain he coolly descries, they are too impatient or too fearful to wait. Let the eager spirit of merchandize, so clamorous for immediate and tangible returns for every outlay, be kept to its own province among the worldly affairs of hasteful short-lived man. But may it be scourged for ever from that temple where He reigns whose ways are not as our ways, and with whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Remember that success is relative; its means, its manifestations, its speed, its obstacles, infinitely various. The disposition of individuals to join a particular fellowship will be found to depend on the general estimation in which a church is held, as well as upon the preaching or the character of its pastor. One husbandman may have much to do in clearing the ground—to labour much, not only before he can realize a harvest, but before he can even sow his seed as he would. Another has but to put in the sickle and reap, for golden grain is waving to his hand. The strait-handed are not trained to bounty or the indolent to action in a single day. While, therefore, you will earnestly desire the true signs of prosperity, you will not value the sign above the thing signified. You will bear in mind the conditions under which you may personally have to work, and be well aware that the object of your solicitude is a field and not a forcing-house.

In these happier times of diffused religious knowledge, less immediate result is to be looked for from any single sermon. You must expect to work most commonly upon men's minds by the continued iteration of warnings or entreaties calculated to disturb their false security; by undoing on the Sabbath at least a little of what the world has been doing in the meanwhile; by keeping spiritual realities perseveringly before them; loosening, by successive

strokes (no one of which, perhaps, with all your earnestness, will produce any violent agitation), the earth about the soul, so that it shall not be suffered to harden hopelessly. Perhaps long effort will only succeed in keeping alive in some minds an uneasy suspicion that the world cannot furnish a safe trust or a sufficient good; and that feeling, after another protracted interval, may slowly grow into some spiritual desire; and this ripen, amidst shame and fears and struggles and delays, into prayerfulness; and prayerfulness issue in salvation. The time is long, but what so worthy time? Thou hast gained thy brother. And surely we may bear with the slowness of our fellows in these matters who remember how much One above has had to bear with us.

It is, moreover, a most cheering sign of our times that so much religious impression is now produced by the collateral agencies which gather about the ministerial office as their centre; by the teaching of the Sunday-school, in the elder classes more especially; and by the wise or kindly words which good men may speak to the young or the thoughtless as they find occasion. This is as it should be. For this leavening, self-diffusive influence, the church exists, in great measure, and in this every member of it should take some share. In proportion, therefore, as your preaching tends to dispose and to qualify your people for thus guiding those who doubt, for counselling the heedless or comforting the distressed, so far are you working towards the conversion of your fellow-men. Seek at all times thus to multiply yourself in those who labour with you.

Reckon in faith, moreover, on not a little usefulness of which you will see or hear nothing. No sincere and prayerful attempt to speak the truth in love, pleading with man in the name of God, will ever be utterly in vain. Somewhere or in some way it will prevent some evil or increase some good. But the transit of that truth is too subtile; its transmigrations too strange and manifold; its vibrations, commingling with those of other influences, too intricate; its ever multiplying posterity of consequences too remote and thought-outreaching, for any possible analysis. Be sure of it,

there is not less minute and mysterious care in the kingdom of grace than in that of nature. In the world about us one order of creatures is sustained by the crumbs which fall from the ample table of another. Both banquet to the full, nothing wanting, nothing wasted. So likewise is it with the bread of life, and the various nurture of innumerable souls. Many a sunset has seemed an idle glory—a vain splendour, burning itself away in the west, down to the water's edge. Night comes, and the last ember grows grey. The fires are spent, the show is over, and a sombre chill falls over all things. But those very vapours, gorgeous with such blazonry just now, are drawn through the cooling air; they descend, heavy with their damps, and creep along the fields, and slowly wind their pageantry of white mist along the water-courses, and hang their multitude of drops upon the dusty bushes and the shrunken flowers. Then may it come to pass that some of those very drops, coloured a short while since with such a ruddy fire in the heights of the sky, shall live, transformed, a crimson life again in the red petals of the rose; and some of that golden overlaying of the heavens take substance and reappear—the gold-dust in the heart of some flower that new builds its beauty with the climbing moisture. Such translations and resurrections are among the emblems of fancy, but they shadow forth the realities of faith. They represent for us that law of Omniscient Love which suffers no true words, no holy endeavours utterly to perish, but does, by an inscrutable spiritual chemistry, give them entrance under new forms and in new combinations into other shapes of life, when to mortal eyes they were lost or dead; which can conserve and kindle, out of the persecuted and all but extinguished light of one age, a beacon of glory for another; and which will find for despoiled and hunted Truth throughout all time some new investiture, some habitation ready, until she shines in the raiment of her rightful sovereignty, and all the world shall be her palace.

While careful yourselves to look forward with no such hopes as are quite beyond likelihood, exercise a wise forethought also as to

the expectations you awaken. Be slow to speak of the changes you have in view, of the renovation you purpose bringing to pass. Do not harshly shock the self-esteem of men, or alarm them for their old and easy customs, by announcing a revolution, by seeming to suppose that they have all been ignorant hitherto of what is becoming, or remiss in what is right. In churches, as in nations, healthful action and well-balanced government are the work of time; they must be the growth of elements already there or gradually introduced—while the most ingenious constitution sketched on paper is a mere toy because it attempts everything at once, and because no community will work at a moment's notice in a mode completely new.

Do not by proclamation at the outset lay out your time lavishly, promising a long catalogue of engagements, surrendering almost every evening and many morning hours to committees, Bible-classes, and what not. Demands of this sort will come fast enough of themselves. You may find this methodical plan, drawn up in that fresh zeal to which every duty seemed of equal importance, impracticable in fact. At the commencement of your ministry you will need more time for study, and not less, than others. Wait awhile. See what those things are which are the most needful to be done, and which will not be done unless you do them, and what again are those you may safely commit to others. Mature your plans by degrees, while experience and observation are doing their work. To be forced, after awhile, to change your professed distribution of time, to give up anything you had publicly undertaken will subject you to the suspicion of precipitation or of fickleness; and some will say within themselves, 'This man began to build, and was not able to finish.'

Once more, as to your preaching. In these days you can scarcely touch any scriptural topic without being reminded that it has been treated as debateable ground. At every point of attack and defence go on, and even at the grand foundations of Christianity you hear the sound of sundry pickaxes, very busy if not very formidable,

wherewith some are tapping away in the dark with all their might. Do not, on this account, suffer your preaching to take too disputatious or polemical a cast. Hungry men look for bread at your hands. Now it is said that the barbarous Otomacs frequently feed on clay. Give the people living bread, and do not expatiate, instead, on the indigestibility of those earthy devices wherewith some forlorn enemies of the truth are fain to keep in them what soul they have. Never let the pulpit be a mere mount of commination, or a place of spectacle, where men are summoned to witness the dexterous demolition of a theory, or the admonitory chastisement of a heretic. This was the error of corrupt and formalized Lutheranism, when the spirit of the Reformation was lost in the letter. Every preacher seemed to live for the denunciation of Calvinists and Crypto-Calvinists. Every church was spiritually what ours were often literally in the old English wars, when the mangonel and the cross-bow bolts stood ready on the battlemented tower—when military stores were piled in the vestry, and a moat ran through the churchyard. So baited did men find their tempers, and so barren their hearts under this *régime*, that numbers were only too glad to turn for comfort to the dreaming cobbler Jacob Behmen;—and verily the enthusiasm of that pious and kind-hearted visionary was nearer to the kingdom of God than the bitter formalism from which his followers fled.

Be not ready to affix damaging epithets or to attribute crooked motives to those who differ from you. Distinguish as accurately and as charitably as you can between that enmity which can only spring from the evil heart, and those differences or difficulties which may have their rise in the intellect. Let it be felt in fit season that you are well acquainted with the controversies carried on about you, and that you can discuss when necessary the questions which they raise with comprehensiveness and discrimination. Once disputes might be summarily settled or objections for the time disposed of by the authority of office, by declamatory dogmatism, by the dexterous use of popular religious phrases and party cries, or

by injurious appellations, the very sound of which awakened all the rancour of prejudice or all the fears of piety. But such expedients are now, happily, of very limited service. Those condemnatory epithets and envenomed nicknames, which assume in their significance the very point in question, can be put no more in such frequent requisition, and quench no longer either the lamp of truth or the fire of the incendiary. Such words resemble those large extinguishers with curled tops which you still see sometimes on either side the doorsteps of old houses in London—the link-boys used to thrust their torches up them when those whom they attended had been lighted home—and they had their office in the days of sedan-chairs, of red-heeled shoes, of wigs and lamplessness; but now, unused and out of date, extinguish nothing. Let no such contrivance of language, obsolescent if not obsolete, have any place in your theological apparatus.

Remember, also, that much of the effectiveness of your preaching will depend on what you have the discretion to omit, as well as on what you actually say. Your real progress in the adequate treatment of your theme will often more resemble that of the sculptor than the painter, and you will advance by striking off rather than by laying on. Abandon all fear of not finding enough to say. From an apprehension of this sort spring those disproportionate and irrelevant introductions which weary before the real subject is even entered on, whose bulk of preliminary generalities straitens or excludes the fresh material actually furnished by the text, and makes the sermon like a spare-bodied pamphlet prefaced by the portliness of a quarto volume.

Take the time requisite to look carefully at your subject, to survey it in different aspects, to separate the central truth of it from subordinate adjuncts, and when this heart of the matter has been patiently sought, truly discerned, and steadily contemplated, your own glowing apprehension of it will carry you beyond the need of all technical crutches, and teach you to reject all profitless minutiæ. But for such insight time is requisite, and thought before

you write; and only after long practice does it become in some sort instinctive and spontaneous. Often on the first glance at some bold headland, it will appear at once the commanding feature of the line of coast on which it towers. But on a second and more comprehensive survey, from a more distant point, a purple shoulder that rose in-land behind the promontory is recognised as an eminence far higher. That is, in fact, the central height of all the region round about, the guiding spot upon the mariner's chart, and when the jutting rocks along the shore are hidden from the view, the well-known sea-mark of the far-off sail. So will it frequently happen that on the first and hasty view of any subject of inquiry, some matter of detail is mistaken for its main feature, a secondary or adventitious circumstance for its primary and distinctive characteristic. Patient consideration will correct such errors, will make true selection—saying not what might be, but just the thing which should be said; and rich will be the reward.

Some such price of delay and effort, all who write or speak with clearness and force, have been content, in one form or another, readily to pay. Those who investigate abstruse or complex questions succeed as they slowly throw to the right and left the successive obstructions, incumbrances, or accretions, that envelop and disguise the subject, till they have pierced their way to its last recess. Those who group with effect the facts of history, or describe with vividness the scenes of nature, reject in like manner all details and superfluity of circumstance which would intercept, confuse, or overcrowd the view they desire to present. This done, they pause till the conception is perfectly clear, the picture brightly coloured to their own mental eye, and then a fair command of language, a delicate sense of the fitness of words, enables them to employ exactly those terms which alone will cause others to see as they see. It may be said that for such success genius is indispensable; but all men of genius have been at some time thus far men of patience; and it will be well for you to think, not of what genius may accomplish, but of what perseverance must. All such men have known how to

wait, coveting not a deceptive self-complacent facility, but laborious excellence. It seems as though no time were too long for them to await a worthy prey. At every game they would not stoop. They have watched, long-enduring, like the eagle on some topmost tree overlooking some great American river, on the outlook for a quarry fitting for the king of birds. The fish leap in the stream below; the countless fleets of the widgeon, the mallard, and the teal, are seen far down, covering with plumage the broad waters—all unheeded. But the hoarse clanging note of the wild swan is heard labouring heavily up the wind. With a cry more dreaded than the crack of the woodman's rifle, the Olympian bird sweeps down upon his victim. In vain those doublings—that rush toward the safety of the water—the strife is over—those scimitar talons have struck beneath the wing, and the prey is flung helpless on the shore.

In conclusion; you will require some branch of study which may be pursued at successive intervals alternately with your stated labour for the pulpit. Without this you will be liable to fall into a desultory and superficial habit, working only disjointedly, for brief spaces, as necessity recurs, and losing in isolated efforts for an immediate purpose all faculty for the more severe and protracted research of the student. Such a loss would tell inevitably at last on your general powers, and so on the power you brought into the pulpit. You will probably find some among those about you who look with jealousy and grave suspicion on these collateral labours in the case of the minister of religion. They think you are robbing them of something. They fall into this mistake because they are ignorant of the laws which govern the life of studious men. They are not aware of the value of such discipline for maintaining the tone of the mind, and that for the brain, as for other fields, a rotation of crops is necessary. They little think that they are receiving the results of the very studies which move their complaint in the freshness and force with which they enable you to handle your sacred theme. They do not understand how a man's sermons would be unspeakably the worse, and not the better, were he to do nothing

else; and were his mental horizon continually bounded by the prospect of next Sunday. Know your own duty, then, and do it. Thread your weeks, as time allows, with some such vein of toil. Your mind will not grow after you have once dropped into routine. When you cease to make from time to time exertions which task it to the full, your self-development has reached its close.

Your own predilections may already have led you to select, with this view, some branch of theological science as your chosen walk. If not, I would commend one study especially to your notice—the history of religious opinion. With this department of the knowledge demanded by your profession you are at present not unfamiliar. But it will acquire a new interest, and prove fraught with new advantage, if portions of it be made the subject of a thorough investigation on your own account. I do not mean that you should store, or rather infest, your memory with the mere external details and dry minutiæ of such history, but that you should enter, as you may find opportunity, on the more philosophical study of it. Examine and judge for yourselves concerning the working of the religious element in various conditions of society. See how men were looking in other times at those great questions which are substantially the same for all time. Enquire why certain attempts at reformation or counter-reformation succeeded or failed —from what causes in the doctrines preached, in the character of those who preached, or in the temper of those who heard them. You may mark the causes which have tended to stagnate and corrupt religion, or to purify and diffuse it. You may trace the fashioning of an article or doctrine, welded by the blows and in the heat of controversy, or watch the reciprocal action of religion and philosophy. You may survey the shifting fields of conflict between faith and unbelief, or passing from quarter to quarter of the Christian encampment, observe in what way extreme has always begotten extreme.

Historical enquiries such as these will keep in use much of the philology and the philosophy you have already acquired, will

exercise in concert your reasoning and your imaginative powers, will discipline your judgment, and train you to critical sagacity in the balancing of evidence. But, apart from such general service, a twofold benefit will attend such studies. These travels into other times, like observant journies through foreign lands, will enlarge and liberalise the mind. With an appreciation of home nowise lessened, but augmented rather, you will become acclimated to different religious temperatures. You will be delivered from that narrowness which would assume that genuine religion must always manifest itself in the one particular way observable immediately about you, and from confounding the names, the occasional instrumentalities, or the transitory modes of good and evil with the principles themselves. You will gain many a new and deeper insight into that human nature whose inmost wants are everywhere the same. Your acquaintance with the past will do much to keep you right amidst the haste or prejudice of the present; and your active part in the present will vivify and render comprehensible the past. Thus informed, you will not imagine that all the truth is on the one side and all the error on the other. Your broader apprehension will avail itself of light, and will embrace the good wherever they are found. When standing in some copse of firs upon a sunny day, you may have seen how the ruddy trunks, branchless till towards the summit, were braceleted with alternate light and shadow, as the sunshine slanted through or as each darkened some portion of its neighbour,—but no two with exactly the same graduation of the stem—the same apportionment of dark and bright; every one of them with some part shadowed, every one with some part sunlit. So is it with the shadowing and the brightness of the true and false among the great parties which have grown up side by side within the Church of Christ—the darkness is not all in one place, nor is the light.

Again, if familiar with the past, you will be neither fascinated nor dismayed by the pretended religious novelties of the present. You will be aware that only the mask is modern, and remember how

the same ideas have played their part before, and failed. Your acquaintance, too, with the religious experiments of other times will deliver you from crotchets, from enthusiastic confidence in any particular panacea, from expecting to rectify all that we lament by some pet organization, or by the iteration of some extreme and isolated truth. You will not seek, in short, to realize by a detached fragment of the divine Verity those benign results which history shows us have never followed save from the fair announcement of its main substance.

And now, my brethren, I commit you to Him who sends us not on this great warfare at our own charges. May your lives be full of usefulness, and therefore full of happiness. May you never cease to look unto the Strong for strength, and as your day is so that strength shall be. May the great Head of the Church unceasingly sustain, endow, and prosper you; and may you hear him say, when the sun of life's labouring day shall have set, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things!'

ART AND HISTORY.*

BOTANISTS tell us of certain plants which always spring up where certain races have occupied the soil. Some of these grow wherever the Red Man has trodden, others follow as constantly the appearance of the White. As it is with man, so is it in great measure with man's thoughts. Certain forms of art are found to spring up in the train of certain prevalent ideas, modes of thought, or national characteristics. Any one who studies history in its relation to art, and art in its relation to history, will soon be made aware that his pathway is lined by a series

* From *Fraser's Magazine* for October, 1857.

of such correspondences on either hand. The connexion is close between a revolution in society and a revolution in æsthetics. A style of art has been frequently determined by a form of government: the disputes of the schools have not been without their influence on the practice of the studio. If it were possible for some accident to destroy the materials of history, the loss might be to a large extent repaired from the monuments of art. As the soil of a remote district might be deduced from specimens of its flora, so might the leading features of a national history be re-constructed from an acquaintance with its poems, its pictures, or its buildings. An age or nation, with its works of art, may be compared to some curious clock that sends out a different group of figures with each hour it strikes. At an early morning hour comes forth a Peter with his warning bird; at high noon Sol, with a golden hammer; at eventide a Nun in white and grey, ringing a silver bell. If a veil were hung over the dial-plate, or the hands had been broken off, or the striking mechanism long since rusted and useless, we should know how the index would have pointed, and what strokes would have been struck, so long as we could still see the figures coming out in their time and order on the little platform above, and going in at their folding-doors. So, whatever Time may have concealed or consumed, we might infer the dawning, the noontide, or the declining hours of a people's day by the personages it puts forward on the stage of Art—by the heroes of its drama, the favourites of its song, or the saints of its calendar.

Even a cursory survey of the connecting links between art and history will suggest many inquiries of interest, and bring out some startling examples both of agreement and of contrast. We shall sometimes see greatness in history and greatness in art associated. At other times they diverge. If we could indicate by lines on the map of Europe the successive shiftings of the centres of power and the centres of taste, we should find them sometimes coincident, sometimes far apart,—like the isothermal lines and the parallels of latitude on a chart of physical geography. A political alliance, a

commercial relationship, a foreign conquest, communicate their influence speedily to art, and elevate or depress it. Compacts have been signed between citizens and sovereigns (of interest apparently only to the Dryasdusts) which we now see to have been fertile in galleries and pictures. Seeds have been sown in certain social and ecclesiastical conflicts, whence were to arise whole forests of columns and of spires. Civic faction at home, and bloody fields abroad, have more than once cleared a space with the sword where the glass-painter might build his oven, and the sculptor his studio. Such struggles may now be seldom brought to mind, but they live in their unforeseen results. They have found their emblazonment in wondrous windows, their monuments in living stone. If painter's brush and knightly lance, sculptor's chisel and diplomatic pen, could hold a colloquy, we might hear some strange stories of their fellowship.

The history of a nation is determined in great measure by its geographical position. Art receives its complexion from the same cause. Venice furnishes a good example. Why was her art so exclusively legendary and religious? How was it that her painters resisted so steadily the classic influences of the Renaissance, overflowing the rest of Italy, from Rome on the one side, and Florence on the other? Savonarola, the great Puritan divine of Florence, could exorcise only for a brief hour the newly-risen spirit of Paganism. Venice preserved herself without an effort, as by the mere instinct of her people. Not one Olympian deity could survive the air of the lagunes. A glance at the position of Venice explains this immunity. The Queen of the Adriatic was intensely religious, because she had been called, like Poland and like Spain, to defend one of the great outposts of the Cross against the Crescent. From the days when sightless, white-haired Dandolo led her galleys against Constantinople, her most glorious wars had been holy wars—her struggle for life, a championship of the faith. Legends made her only literature. Rome was scarcely more rich than Venice in the most sacred kind of treasure—in relics, brought with silks and spices in her home-bound argosies from every region of the East.

So, from the most potent member of her secret council, to the meanest workman in her dockyards, Venice was devoted to that Church she had so heroically served. The painter breathed the common atmosphere. Does he paint the portrait of a doge, arrayed in his robes of state? He places him on his knees, with bowed head, at the feet of the Virgin.

The Venetian school excelled in colour, as did the Tuscan in design. The love of colour was not peculiar to her artists—did not originate with them. Shut up between the vault of the sky and the level of the sea, the Venetian eye could not feast itself with variety of form. Many of the beauties of natural colour were also denied: the hues of the mountain side, changing with the hours of the day—the hues of the woodland, changing with the seasons of the year. So Venice indemnified herself by artificial colour. We see this in her Bellinis, Giorgiones, and Titians; we see it in the variegated dyes of her architecture, in the gaudy fashion of her old parti-coloured costume.

Look at Holland, again, so prosaic and realistic in its art. The very ground on which the Dutch painter stood was created and maintained by watchful labour—was the spoil of nature, not her gift. Men love much what has cost them much. The Hollander rejoiced to see truthfully depicted the vehicle of his industry, the fruit of his enterprise, the comfort he had plucked from the very teeth of the sea. Pleasant to his eyes that picture of well-fed kine, ruminating on one of those grassy banks that fortressed him and his household from the rage of waters. When rains or fog obscured the outward landscape, the picture of a trim and bright interior heightened his sense of snugness. As the knight hung his sword in the hall, so the Dutch skipper would suspend a painting of his ship in the back parlour. Amidst the sunshine and the fruitfulness of Italy, man may work little and dream much. But what Hollander can doze away upon the grass long summer hours of reverie? Full soon would the first pangs of rheumatism and lumbago break up his dreams of the ideal. Evelyn was astonished

at the immense number of pictures he saw in the Dutch fairs. He attributes the briskness of the trade in paintings to the necessary limitations of the country. The farmer or the citizen of sea-locked Holland, unable to lay out his gains on tracts of land, found a medium for speculation or investment in these works of art.

In Russia, there can be no doubt that the heavy snows necessitated the substitution of steep roofs and spires for the turban-shaped cupolas of the Greeks.

Compare Gothic and Grecian art in their representations of Death. To the Pagan, Death was terrible; but he made its emblem lovely. To the Christian, Death brought less of fear; but he made its emblem hideous. In Greek art, Death appears as a beautiful youth; in Gothic art, he grins and threatens—a ghastly skeleton. The Greek would fain hide away every painful thought under wreaths of flowers, graceful forms, and pleasant words; calling the snake-haired Furies Eumenides, and the sepulchre a sleeping-place. The Goth, familiar with savage nature, has first braved horror, and then revels in it. His imagination, and so his art, have been thus grimly fashioned from of old by barbaric hardship—by the gloom of Germanic forests—by perils of the floating ice and the iron coast—by long and eerie nights of winter among the pines, the glaciers, and the wolves. With regard to this particular instance—the representation of Death—another fact has to be taken into consideration. To the German of the Middle Age, Death was not his enemy only, but that of Christ. Death and the Devil were the vanquished foes of his deliverer. They had done, and were doing, their baffled worst against God and man; but they must tremble at the cross. So the Gothic artist signalized at once his Lord's triumph and his own hope by making both antagonists ugly and abominable. He vented his abhorrence and his scorn in the fleshless anatomy of the one, and the bestial appendages of the other.

Great calamities, and the superstitious fears they stimulate, leave an impress upon art not to be mistaken. The troubled interval between the ninth and twelfth centuries exemplifies this connexion.

The career of Charlemagne had been favourable to art, directly and indirectly. In the south, art was fostered by a prowess which gave peace to Italy; in the north, by a patronage which gave civilization to France. But the culture introduced by Charlemagne could only reach a portion of a class—some thousands of freemen among myriads of serfs. That class was exhausted with fearful rapidity by incessant battles against Saxon, Saracen, and Hun. Any chance invader found victims, rather than antagonists, in the hapless remnant of slaves whom counts and abbots were afraid to arm. And thus, under the degenerate Carlovingians, France was filled with rapine, burning, and bloodshed. A few veterans, who could remember having witnessed the coronation of Charlemagne at Rome, survived to see Paris and Aix-la-Chapelle taken by Norman pirates who had paddled up the Seine in osier boats. There was not a town which had not once at least been plundered by these marauders. And pestilence and famine followed in the train of massacre.

Moreover, as the ninth century closes, men find themselves approaching the awful year one thousand—the date whereon, according to the general belief of Christendom, the world was to come to an end, and the judgment day to open. An almost universal barrenness seems to say that earth is approaching the end of her stores —like a fortress provisioned by the Almighty for just those thousand years. Many plagues are abroad. The roads frequented by pilgrims are lined with the dead and dying. At the shrines, as on the brink of a general grave, the sufferers kiss their life out on the infected bones of saints.

In the more sombre character given to the representations of Christ we see the effect of these portentous and incessant calamities —of the uncertainty and distress of men's lives—of their forebodings of judgment. In earlier ages faith was more joyous, as it was more pure, despite the cruelties of persecution. Devout feeling loved to portray our Lord under the most winning and gracious aspects. He is seen in the catacombs and on the sarcophagi as a beautiful young man, who is healing the sick or feeding the multitude. Most fre-

quently he is the Good Shepherd, carrying home on his shoulder the lost sheep. But from the tenth century gloomier thoughts prevail. Christ is now depicted in the churches as older. His aspect has become severe. Instead of smiling on the sorrowful, he frowns upon the lost. In the place of the Good Shepherd appears the Judge of all the earth. In some of the French cathedrals he is represented as turning a deaf ear to the intercession of the saints. He seems to crush the wicked as he exhibits to them his wounds. The stream of his blood pursues them like a dragon.

Didron has remarked that the relative position occupied by the theological Virtues—Faith, Hope, and Charity—is frequently suggestive of the spirit of a period. That Virtue which is placed, in a window or on a manuscript, above or between the other two, is to be understood as occupying the highest and most favoured position. In earlier times, when Christian doctrine came to the nations as a novelty, Faith had been set highest. Now Faith was secure, men believed and trembled. Hunger was the worst heresy. For Charity, again, there seemed neither time nor place. But to Hope men clung, and gave supremacy to her who drew heavenward their despairing eyes, away from the disorder and distraction of this world.

A period disturbed by severe political struggle is by no means so unfavourable as some suppose to the progress of art. The strife which laid the foundation of our political freedom is contemporaneous with the glory of our mediæval art. While the barons were contending with King John, and the people were wresting their liberties from Henry III., the finest parts of our most beautiful cathedrals were in process of erection. Convent-schools made instruction in art accessible to the commonalty. Popular enthusiasm encouraged by its industry and its applause the ambition or the piety of the king and the noble, the merchant and the prelate. Pageants, processions, and a most picturesque costume, trained the eye or quickened the fancy. Historic and domestic sympathies filled the churches with statues and with effigies. Our rising commercial greatness patronized art without degrading it. In the sixteenth century, the little republic

of Siena affords a similar instance of devotion to art in the midst of domestic trouble and foreign alarm. Genuine art must spring from the inward nature and the daily life. That earnestness which gives men wisdom and courage in action, will impart to their imagination and their tastes that higher truthfulness which is immortality.

An age of enjoyment and of festival, of shows without doors and of luxury within, hastens the decline of art. The tree itself is hidden by a gaudy overgrowth of parasitical plants. Subordinate ornament begins to take the highest place. A crowd of dazzling impertinences push aside the solemn splendours of more thoughtful times. An ostentatious egotism succeeds to aspiration and to reverence. Thus art suffered manifest harm toward the close of the fourteenth century from the rapid increase of every kind of luxury, both in England and in France. Inferior masters of the Flemish school accelerated the progress of corruption.

It can scarcely be matter of surprise that the artists of Flanders should always have been more or less prone to excessive ornamentation. The wealthy burghers of Bruges and of Ghent were unsurpassed in their love of costly furniture and gorgeous apparel. The ducal court of Burgundy was outshone by none in Europe in the bravery of silks and cloth of gold, of inlaid armour, of precious stones, and rainbow blazonry. And the Flemish painters were for the most part either the *employés* of those sumptuous communes, or the retainers of that glittering court. Hence their practical tone, their brilliance, their affluence of decoration; so unlike the wan, wistful, ascetic ideal of artists bred within the cloister. In Italy, a Fra Angelico will designedly confine his best efforts to the attitude of the head or the expression of the countenance—to the nobler parts of man. To the lower extremities of his figures he scarcely deigns to give finish, completeness, even accuracy. He signifies his devout disdain of earth by his neglect of those parts of us which touch it, and are degraded by the touch. He will paint the body only for the sake of the soul, and so as to express the impatience of the soul to quit the body. In Flanders, on the contrary, what sub-

stantial figures represent the personages of sacred story! how real, how radiant with civic comfort those Flemish faces, even in the Holy Land: and what exquisite finish gives deceptiveness to that embroidered doublet, to that satin robe, to that chain of pearls.

Viewing side by side the history of the Church and the history of Art, we see art often quickened by the earnestness of faith, always killed by the earnestness of persecution. The loss of love is the loss of serenity, of insight, of elevation. Polemics and æsthetics cannot be brought to lodge in the same house. The seventeenth century, loud with religious controversies, bloody with religious wars, was as poor in art as in charity. The Reformation was long injurious to art, from the force of outward associations; the Counter-Reformation quite as much so, from the inherent fierceness of its spirit. Of that Counter-Reformation the Jesuits were the heart and head. Under such management, and at such a time, religion became essentially antagonistic. Its simplicity and its unconsciousness vanished with the challenge of its claims. The Jesuit lived to outpray, outpreach, outwit, outwatch, outwear the Protestant in the cell, before the altar, on the mission, in the cabinet, in the field. The hated form of a rival was ever present to his worship and his work. Every stroke of the ascetic lash upon his flesh, was a blow struck at the Protestant cause—every convert, a prey snatched, not so much from Satan as from Luther—every prayer involved an execration—every hope was half a curse. But if the vindictive spirit of Jesuitism was injurious to art, still more so was its ecclesiastical theory. The former degraded the motive, the latter fettered the hand; the one stole from art its single-heartedness, the other wrested from it its freedom. For every national style of art was so much graven or painted heresy in the eyes of men whose master purpose it was to render all Christendom Roman. True to their centralizing principle, they set their faces against Gothic architecture; and multiplied Italian churches, corruptly classical, gaudy with all the hues of marble.

It is interesting to contrast with such injury the beneficial influ-

ence exerted upon art by the earlier orders of Francis and of Dominic. The life of St. Francis was rich in miracle, prolific in legend. Assisi was a fountain of inspiration to a host of saintly painters; it was the very Jerusalem of pre-Raphaelite art. There was a time when the uncouthness and the gloom of Byzantine tradition threatened to enslave the painters of the West. History points us to two leading causes whereby that influence was arrested, and at last repelled. First of all, the Crusades revealed to the West the decrepitude and the treachery of the Greek. The men having grown contemptible, their art appeared unlovely. Still, so far, we have negation merely; and Italy has nothing as yet to oppose to a style she can no longer cordially admire. But the positive motive—the second cause we search for, is found in the rise of the two great Mendicant orders. The romantic worship of St. Francis, and the devotion of Dominican cloisters, gave to Italy the creative impulse lacking—a loftier ideal—a native and exhaustless legendary theme. After Cimabue, Giotto, and Masaccio, the reappearance of Greek art could never trouble the triumph of the Latin.

The Counter-Reformation, religious as it was, perpetuated many of the worst features of the irreligious Renaissance. With greater intensity in its purpose, it evinced no corresponding elevation in its ideal. Among the popes who succeeded Leo X., few employed so great a number of artists as Sixtus V. As a suppressor of banditti, the rough, imperious old man is admirable; as a patron of artists, he appears ostentatious, despotic, brutal. The façades of the buildings he erected were mere supports for the exhibition of his arms—monuments of his energy, his vanity, and his want of taste. The common evil of papal patronage was in his case more than usually apparent—namely, the impatience of a man advanced in years to see finished the painting, the palace, or the church which is to be associated with his name. Thus excellence was sacrificed to speed, and the proud citizens of Rome witnessed with indignation the influx of a crowd of transmontane artists, summoned to hasten by multitude the progress of their public works.

In the Christian art of the Catacombs, the fact of persecution is revealed to the most careless eye. From those mournful, yet triumphant syllables and symbols, we might postulate some Decius or Marcus Aurelius, had Eusebius never chronicled a martyrdom. Art is there the monument of men dying daily—of men whose life is itself a social death. It reduces itself to the monogram; veils itself in the emblem. Affection, demanding a memorial with tears, must devise something speedy, something secret. But when persecution gives place to freedom, behold how the grain of mustard-seed has become a great tree, which branches forth in colossal figures of mosaic and of gold, and blossoms in white marble, serpentine, and porphyry around the apse of the basilica.

Some of the mediæval heresies and disputes have left their traces upon art. It is possible that a lurking Gnosticism may have added a designed severity to rudeness of conception, and rendered many representations of the Father so gloomy and forbidding. It has been thought that the controversy in the twelfth century concerning the Paraclete, to which Abelard gave occasion, has influenced the position of the sacred persons on some French windows of the period.

It is certain that the symbols of power with which the figure of the Deity was invested, varied with the government of particular countries, and their relation to the Pope. In Germany, the Father appears clad in imperial robes. In Italy and Spain, never in England, he wears the papal tiara; while France, especially when engaged in conflict with the Papacy, repudiates the triple crown, and depicts the Supreme as king. These insignia are the metaphors of art, and express, like the proverbs and the figurative colloquialisms of popular speech, the admiration or the antipathies of a nation.

The decoration of churches in the north of Europe is for the most part more practical and didactic than in the south. Suger represented the feats of the Crusaders on the windows of St. Denis. The churches were picture-bibles for the people. The narratives of Old Testament history were read on vast illuminated leaves of glass.

The cathedral of Chartres, with its multitudinous statues and symbols, religious, historic, and physical, was at once the hornbook and the encyclopædia of many generations. The ecclesiastical art of the south sought rather to kindle a sentiment than to record events. Its favourite subjects were taken from dogma rather than from history. Coronations and assumptions of the Virgin in some upper realm of clouds, eclipsed the exploits of the church militant in this lower world.

The spirit of Renaissance art is doubtless in many respects blameworthy; its influence in many ways injurious. But the blame, be it more or less, should not wholly lie (where some enthusiasts would centre it) with the ostentation of merchant princes, and the ungodliness of artists. Men did not turn to pagan antiquity until the corruptions of the Church had rendered their old allegiance no longer possible. Effete as were the gods and goddesses of Greece and Rome, they had more life in them than the superstition they displaced. Platonism was a power in the fifteenth century, philosophy new-born, and speculation fraught with promise; while to multitudes the cowl was a fool's cap, and the crosier a croupier's rake. It was the disgust rather than the degeneracy of the sixteenth century which invested heathendom with exaggerated charms. Men saw the ideal of the old world, the actual of the new; the purest aspirations of ancient Greece, the dirtiest mechanism of modern Rome; the happiest art and the loftiest philosophy of heathenism: while Christendom exhibited but a futile statecraft in politics, a detected priestcraft in religion. The competition was not fair. For nearly a century before the revival of letters, art had been growing less religious, because the Church was growing so likewise, and because the adventure and activities of commerce had of necessity awakened men to tastes and interests beyond the routine of ecclesiastical ideas.

In France, it is remarkable to see how closely art has followed in the track of political theories. The magnificent absolutism of Louis XIV. had raised up a school of art in many respects national,

in no way natural. It might have been expected that the readers of Rousseau and Fontenelle would have returned in some degree to nature; that the Revolution would have emancipated art, along with so much beside. But the same movement which shook off the yoke of feudalism in politics, lent only additional oppressiveness to the yoke of classicism in the arts. How was this? France unhappily had not, like England, an old constitutional liberty of her own to fight for. She had no Magna Charta to defend; she gloried in no Habeas Corpus; she could point with triumphant indignation to no Bill of Rights. So she was fain to seek a scheme of polity in Utopia, a Bible in Plutarch, and a patron saint in Brutus. In like manner, such art as could survive amidst so much confusion, became classic to servility. The republics of Greece and Rome supplied models alike for the studio and the State. Antiquity led captive the imaginations of men in the sixteenth century by her genius for art; in the eighteenth by her genius for government. The French architecture of the last century assumed the Roman type, became practical and civic. Why build churches, without religion; chateaux, without noblesse; palaces, without a king? So architects are busy with bridges, market-halls, and abattoirs, with baths, with fountains, and with aqueducts.

The most flourishing periods of art have been those in which instruction has been most accessible, and popular sympathy most strongly engaged. Art is then healthiest when the patronage of the few is quickened and sustained by the applause of the many—when the common soil whence it springs is as rich as upper air and sun are kindly. It was thus in England in the thirteenth century; thus in Flanders in the time of the Van Eycks; thus in Italy in the days of Giotto and Cimabue. Then the exhibition of a new window or a new painting made a holiday as populous, as full of flowers, as loud with shouting voices, as the entrance of an emperor bringing privilege and franchise. The painter felt that he spoke to the great heart of humanity when streets like the Borgo Allegri took a name of joy for ever from his

workmanship—when his picture, borne in solemn procession to the church, was followed with pride by the greatest men, and with blessing by the holiest, while the trooping city rent the air with acclamations as he passed, triumphant, with the laurels on his brow. But the patronage of kings and courts fluctuates with fashion, with politics, with conquest. The successful invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. was fatal to national art in France. Not the slightest prospect of success had the French painter, unless he pretended to Italian birth, or professed Italian training. In England, the Tudors and the Stuarts injured us by their almost exclusive patronage of foreign art. In the days of Queen Anne, we adopted something of the old Roman pride, and claiming conquest for ourselves, abandoned culture to the effeminate foreigner. Dutch formalism or Chinese monstrosity were the pets of tasteless fashion. English art was not to be revived till a thorough Englishman should appear and appeal to the English people. Such a genius England hailed in Hogarth.

THE LEGEND OF THE SANGREAL.*

NEXT to the old laws and the old ballads, we are most indebted to the old stories for our knowledge of the past. There are satirical and comic tales to give us pictures of the mediæval manners. Chaucer and Boccacio are our Aristophanes and Plautus. There are the legends of miracle and saintship to represent to us the faith of the Middle Age. Between the laughter-loving freedom of the former class of tale and the solemn supernaturalism of the latter lies a third species,—the story of chivalrous adventure and marvellous enchantment. In these romances the remains of Gothic superstition and fragments of oriental fable play a conspicuous part beside the

* From the *National Magazine.*

prowess of 'Sir Knight' and the piety of 'Sir Priest.' Hence the trolls and ellewomen, the giants and the dwarfs, the magic rings and flying-horses, the far-working spells of the wizard and the glamour of the fay. Among those traditions, which were the common property of so many minstrels and storytellers, there is not one which is more remarkable than the Legend of the Sangreal. It combines in itself nearly all the constituent elements to which we have adverted. It is as full of wonders as the story of Aladdin in the *Arabian Nights*, or the legends of Solomon and Aschmedai in the *Talmud*. It is as full of knightly combats and adventures as Palmerin of England or Amadis of Gaul. It is as full of reverence for holy men and holy things as the *Lives of the Saints* or the story of *Count Robert*. It unites (as did the military orders of Christendom) the spiritual and the secular interest, and belongs alike to the chivalrous world and the ecclesiastical. It might be selected from all the rest as the representative fiction of the Middle Ages.

The origin of the tradition concerning the Sangreal is enveloped in obscurity. Into the learned inquiries of Büsching, Lachmann, Simrock, or Göschel, it is not our purpose to enter. Thus much is certain, that *San* means *holy*, and that *Greal*, *Graal*, or *Grâl* is the Provençal for *vessel*. The legend, then, of the Holy Vessel appears in various shapes in our *King Arthur*, in the *Mabinogion*, and in the *Parzival* of Wolfram von Eschenbach. In the *Parzival*—the great German poem of the thirteenth century—it assumes its most poetical form, and has been invested by the somewhat fanciful antiquarianism of Germany with the most profound significance.

The early history of the Grâl carries us back to the expulsion of the rebel-angels. It is said that, when the thrones and princedoms of the fallen were driven over the bounds of heaven,

> 'With hideous ruin and combustion down,'

the falchion of the archangel Michael, descending full upon the crest of Satan, dashed into a thousand fragments his resplendent crown,—that coronal, fashioned of heaven's pearl and diamond and sardonyx

and chrysolite, which had once bound the serene brows of the Son of the Morning, and shone afterwards as the standard followed by revolted myriads in the celestial war. One jewel of this crown, struck off like a spark, leaped out into space, and there hovered long, drifting through limbo and the interlunar realms, till at last it dropped upon our earth. There it was found by some of those angels who render guardian-offices upon this planet. On what summit of snows above all flight of birds, or in what woodland solitude, or down in the heart of what sleeping sea, the angelic eyes discovered the treasure, no chronicler hath told us. The precious stone, itself of marvellous virtue, was fashioned into a vessel, and endowed with yet more blessed potency by the uses to which it was applied. It was said to have held the bread at the Last Supper. In the hands of Joseph of Arimathea, it received the water and the blood which flowed from the pierced side of Christ. It was destined to become the symbol of salvation: but for a long time men remained unprofited by its benignant powers; for a worthy guardian could not be found. The Grâl remained suspended in the heights of air, far above earth's clouds and tempests,—a wandering star, beyond the ken of mariner or the search of the astrologer.

At length Titurel, a prince of Anjou, was made the first Grâl-king. For such an honour wealth gave no fitness, nor learning, nor knightly prowess: only to the pure in heart could the Grâl become visible; only to one who had in him the spirit of the little child, whose unfeigned lowliness was proof against all the pomps and the ambitions of this mortal life, could a gift so priceless be intrusted. We read in *King Arthur* how Sir Launcelot was cast into a deep sleep in a lonesome chapel, where he saw the Grâl brought in, and a wounded knight healed thereby, but was not able himself to arise and draw near because of his guilty love for Queen Guinevere. When the brave and simple-hearted Titurel was appointed guardian, he erected a sumptuous temple to contain the relic, built a castle, and founded an order of knights called the *Templeisen*.

The temple of the Grâl was invisible to every profane eye. Godly

knights and true, to whom it was given to behold it, came upon it unaware, as they rode about redressing wrongs and delivering the oppressed. You, reader, are a hater of wrong-doing, a lowly-minded lover of mercy and truth; and you will be able, therefore, even from our poor description, to behold this temple with the eye of imagination.

See it stand, gorgeous in the light of the setting sun, near the summit of Montsalvage. Around it are black rocks, holding here and there unmelted snows; and beneath, on the shoulders and spreading sides of the mountain, grows an impenetrable forest of cypress. The topmost tree-points are touched ruddily by the sunset; the rest stand dark and stately, like a host of banners of green velvet, close-ranked, hanging heavily in a great calm. In the centre of the temple rises a dome covered with a golden mail, fantastically overrun by branching veins of blue enamel; and on the summit flames a giant carbuncle, the beacon of every Templar homeward-bound. Around the great central cupola stand six-and-thirty towers, each with a spiral staircase winding round its outer wall. Above each tower there seems to hover motionless, poised on its outspread wings, an eagle made of gold. The slanting sun-rays are flashed back from the burnished breasts of this wondrous circle of birds. Each eagle is in truth supported by a cross of crystal, planted on the summit of every tower, too transparent to be visible from where we stand; a symbol this, to the pious fancy of the soldier-monks, of that invisible support the Cross affords to man. At the base of every one of the six-and-thirty towers are two octagonal chapels, —the minor shrines which girdle the precincts of the central sanctuary.

Within the dome the knights see above them a blue vault of sapphire, on which are represented sun and moon in diamonds and topaz; while a circle of brazen columns supports this heaven of precious stones. The crystal pavement reflects the azure of the roof; so that the armed heel appears to stand on air, and every shining pillar is imaged by a line of light that seems to pierce un-

fathomable depths, like that column of glory which descends from an evening sun into the calmness of the sea. In this crystalline floor the art of the mosaic-worker has inserted fishes of every form, carved in onyx, that glance and seem to glide as lights and shadows pass or fall upon them. The deep-browed windows are rich with many-coloured marble and many-coloured glass. The hues on one blend together in a ruddy autumn brown; those of another flame with gold and crimson, like the illuminated capitals of a missal; while a third is crossed with blue over interstices of red, like a trellis-work of amethyst filled with roses. Here the quaint design multiplies a pale flower, like a faint azure flame shooting up between two plume-like leaves of emerald. There lustrous arrow-heads, or *fleur-de-lis*, seem to chase each other round the border. The graceful fantasies of oriental arabesque overrun the snowy marble of the screen. Dragons and gryphons on the groinings of the roof plant their claws on mystic scrolls. In circlets of opal are traced lambs with banners, or castle-gateways with pillars of malachite and purple portcullises, in colours borrowed from the thunder-clouds of summer and the foliage of spring.

Enshrined in the holiest place, bowered deep in exquisite enclosures of sandal-wood and gold, of lapis lazuli and marble, lies the Holy Grâl. The virtues of this stone of stones prolong the life and sustain the vigour of the gallant company of guardian-knights. Were a wounded man at the very point of death, one look thereon would give him six days' life. He who sees it daily, holds the secret of perpetual youth, and need fear no decay or any sickness. By its life-giving power the phœnix springs out of his funeral flame and lives anew—the type of resurrection. On Good Friday a dove, descending from the skies, lays a consecrated wafer on the Grâl; and thus its miraculous potency is every year renewed. It has power, continues the legend, to change a crust into a banquet; and has been thus permitted to repeat the miracle which fed the five thousand among the Galilean hills.

Let us now take a scene from the poem already mentioned, and see how its author, Wolfram, has handled the tradition.

Parzival, weary and belated, was riding onward one dark night, whither he knew not, when he heard the distant fall of surf upon a beach. Making his way toward the shore, he discerns the twinkling light of a fisherman's hut. There he is directed to a neighbouring castle. Arrived under a gloomy mass of wall, he winds his horn; answers questioning by pronouncing the name of the fisherman; rides across the echoing drawbridge, and is received in the courtyard by attendants with torches. He sees with surprise that the tiltyard is overgrown with rank grass, as though many a year had passed since any knight had broken lance there for love of fair lady. They usher him into a vast hall, dazzling with the blaze of a hundred torches. He passes up between couches of costliest workmanship, whereon lie four hundred knights. On the daïs stand three marble vases filled with burning aloe-wood, raising clouds of fragrant incense. In the centre he sees a sick man reclining on a couch. It is Anfortas, the Grâl-king. He beckons Parzival to approach him. At this moment a page brings in a lance from which blood is dropping; he carries it round among the knights, who gaze upon it with looks of sorrow, some uttering lamentations, others sighing and groaning sorely at the sight. Parzival looks on in silence. The preceptor of his youth, the sage Sir Gournemanns, had once warned him against asking questions. The wise advice is, in this instance, unwisely followed. Then, through a door of shining steel, enter four princesses bearing golden candlesticks; and these, with their robes of scarlet, are followed by eight maidens in grass-green samite, carrying a slab of polished garnet. Then, amidst her ladies, the beautiful Repanse de Schoie comes in, the queen of the Grâl castle, and lays before Anfortas a vessel of precious stone.

Now the feast is about to begin; the hall is thronged with attendants, bearing golden ewers, setting out the tables, and presenting bread before the Grâl. The bread thus offered is placed upon the tables, and is, in the very act, transformed and multiplied

into the various viands of a royal banquet. There are peacocks, the knightly birds, garnished with their plumes, boars' heads, and venison; and in the beakers glance and mantle the hippocras and malvoisie and foaming mead; while fruits worthy of paradise blush among their leaves in baskets of fretted silver. Parzival at last retires to rest, still without having asked a question; passes the night troubled by mysterious dreams; and in the morning, surprised at the universal quietness and silence, goes out through the now deserted hall, and quits the castle as he came. As he departs a page cries after him, asking tauntingly why he had put no question to his entertainers.

As it is possible that some of our readers may not be so utterly destitute as Parzival of curiosity, we may add for their benefit that the silent knight lamented long and bitterly his lost opportunity. The shadow of his great disappointment followed him everywhere, darkened hope and faith, filled his soul with impious murmuring, and drove him out on lonesome wanderings, far from all Christian folk and sound of holy bells. At last this pride dissolves in penitence; his faith returns; his purification is accomplished. A messenger is sent to summon him to the Grâl temple; he himself is to be king. Entering the castle a second time, he finds Anfortas still a sufferer from the wound of the poisoned spear, sick almost unto death, but unable to die by reason of the life-sustaining virtue inherent in the Grâl. Parzival releases him in an instant from his pain by asking the long-desired question, 'What ails thee?'

It is pleasant to recognise the existence of such an ideal of Christian knighthood as that which animates the legend of the Sangreal in its more elevated forms. In an age when physical prowess was so highly valued, this tradition gave the highest place to that moral greatness which conquers pride and abandons self. At the same time, this self-conquest is no 'cloistered virtue,' ascetic, pharisaical, and useless. The champions of the Grâl did not hide themselves from the world, though their relic and their residence were to the world so great a mystery. The brave four hundred were imagined

riding through all the lands of Christendom, the hope of oppressed innocence, the terror of lawless strength.

Men call this nineteenth century prosaic. But are there not with us also realities more wondrous than the phantom-temple of the Grâl, which only the lowly-hearted can discern?

THE STORY OF NICHOLAS FLAMEL, THE ALCHEMIST.*

ONE fine summer evening, in the year 1357, Nicholas Flamel was sitting in his stall, which occupied the corner of one of the dirtiest streets in dirty Paris. His little house stood in the shadow of the church of St. Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, whose towers overlooked a network of narrow alleys, inhabited by butchers, tanners, and money-lenders. Very unsavoury was this parish of St. Jacques; but nevertheless very rich. For the trades-corporations who ruled the quarter were thrifty and formidable folk. At a moment's notice, they could turn out a host of burly fellows to maintain their privileges; and when princes wanted money, to whom should they go but to the Lombards of St. Jacques? The stately church owed many a decoration without, and many a monument within, to the piety and the wealth of the dyers, the armourers, and the butchers, who had passed their lives under the sound of its bells, and coveted, when dead, a place within its precincts. Flamel, the scrivener, has but to raise his eyes from the Latin deed which he is transcribing, to look across the street, and they rest on the Marivaux gateway of the church. His gaze is directed thither at this moment. His hand, with its busy pen, lies idle on the bench, as he contemplates in a day-dream the mouldings of the arch, and thinks, 'If ever I

---

* From the *National Magazine.*

am rich, there shall be carvings of mine, too, on those walls. Yes, mine; poor Notary Flamel's. And why not, some day? Ah, if I could only make them out——'

At this point he was startled in the midst of a deep sigh by perceiving that his wife, Pernelle, had approached him unobserved, and was watching his face with a sorrowful sympathizing expression. She did not avert her eyes as he looked up at her: it was he who looked down, and began to examine his pen, as if about to resume his task. Pernelle laid her hand gently on his, and sat down beside him.

'Put it away,' said she. 'Let me speak to you.'

'Well.'

'Nicholas, what is it? To-morrow we shall have been three years married; and you have never given me an unkind word or look. But for the last two months you have not been the same man. Your heart is no longer in your work. You don't sing. You go about sometimes as if you were in a dream. What do you do so often now shut up in the room upstairs? There is some trouble or some scheme that occupies you. What is it that a wife should not know? Why not tell me? Have I ever betrayed a secret of yours? I tell you plainly, I have been miserable since this change in you.'

Nicholas was silent. He seemed to be considering what she said: so Pernelle, like a wise woman, added not another word, and waited patiently. After a silence, which seemed very long, Nicholas suddenly rose, like a man who has made up his mind. He took both her hands in his, looked her gravely and affectionately in the face, and said:—

'Pernelle, you have been prudent; now be doubly so. You shall see that I can trust you. Come upstairs.'

Climbing up a steep dark staircase, they entered their little dormitory—a miserable hole we should call it,—in fact, a decent room for those days. Nicholas unlocked a safe in which he used to keep the law-papers sent him to copy, and drew therefrom a huge book

of great age, bound in brass, which he laid carefully on the little table.

'There,' said he. 'Now you can look at the cause of your trouble, little tender-heart. About two months since, I bought this book of an old pedlar for a couple of florins. Look at these mysterious characters engraved on the cover. And see here, the inside.'

Pernelle uttered a little cry of astonishment. Never had she seen such strange and beautiful figures, or such brilliant colours; though Nicholas had frequently in the house the most costly illuminated manuscripts. On the page at which he had opened the volume was represented a young man with wings at his ankles, holding in his hand a rod, about which were entwined two serpents; and an old man, with huge extended wings, was flying towards him with a scythe, as if to cut off his feet.

Nicholas turned over the leaf.

On the other side was painted a fair flower on the top of a mountain, bent and fluttering under the blast of the north wind. The stalk of the flower was blue, its petals white and red, and its leaves shining with fine gold. Round about, in the sides of the mountain, were caverns in which dragons lay; and gryphons and gryphons'-nests were seen among the black matted boughs of pine trees.

'These,' observed Nicholas, 'are the two sides of the fourth leaf. Now look at the next.'

On the right-hand page Pernelle saw a rose-tree growing against a hollow oak, from the foot of which ran headlong a silver-clear stream of water, which many people were trying in vain to catch in vessels. Then, on the other side, was a fierce king, with a falchion, causing his soldiers to slay a multitude of infants, while their mothers were entreating and weeping, and struggling with the murderers. In the next compartment soldiers were collecting the blood of the infants in a great vessel, wherein *Sol* and *Luna* came to bathe themselves.

'And all this writing,' asked Pernelle, after admiring these and

other pictures dispersed throughout the book,—'what language is it?'

'Latin,' answered Nicholas, turning back to the first page, on which were large capital letters exquisitely coloured. 'Those words mean 'Abraham the Jew, Prince, Priest, Levite, Astrologer, and Philosopher to the Nation of the Jews, dispersed by the wrath of God, wisheth health.' I suspect the book has been stolen from some Rabbi. Then the writer goes on to warn them against idolatry; exhorts them to wait patiently for the Messiah; and at last begins to teach them the art of transmuting metals, that they may be able to pay their great tributes to the Roman emperors, and yet be rich as ever.'

'And is it here?' cried Pernelle, joyfully. 'The great secret? And you will make gold?'

'Ah no, not yet—perhaps never,' said Nicholas; 'though the book brings me almost into the heart of the mystery. Here you see are the processes detailed one after the other. Those little figures in the margin represent the shape of the proper vessels and the colours that will appear in the course of the work; but the *materia prima*, the elementary substance (and without that the rest is waste paper), is not revealed in words. It is indicated, the text says, in these pictures on the fourth and fifth leaves. They are secret symbols. Unless I can meet with some learned Jew, or find a scholar who knows the cabala well, I shall never find out their meaning. I think that young man with the winged feet means Mercury. Perhaps the old man with his scythe is some metal that is to fix it. But these 'perhapses' and 'I thinks' are good for nothing, you know. I must be sure. And as to the other symbols, I cannot so much as conjecture. But they are before my eyes day and night. I dream of them. I see the colours in the clouds. Every garden and every rose-tree sets me to work afresh, trying all sorts of meanings. I keep inserting bits of the pictures in my ornamented capitals. You know how often I have visited the Church

of the Holy Innocents lately. The sun and moon seem to me now only alchemic signs, and the sky is just the fifth leaf of this blessed tormenting book.'

'Sol and Luna bathing in the blood of the innocents,' said Pernelle, very slowly, with a perplexed air.

'I have read,' said Nicholas, 'that, in the language of alchemy, blood signifies the mineral spirit which is in the metals, chiefly Sol, Luna, and Mercury; but how to get at this—or, if I could separate it,—how this process is connected with the others, so as to become the serpents on the seventh leaf; and how then, by drying or digesting these, to produce the fine ruddy powder which is the stone,—all this is utterly beyond me.'

'Well, keep a good heart, dear Nicholas,' said cheerful Pernelle. 'Doubtless Providence hath sent us the book, and the key may follow some day. Rich or poor, we shall be happy while we love and trust each other fully.'

'I, too, feel all the lighter now that I have let you into my secret. I can at least talk over my hopes and perplexities with you.'

And talk they did very often together over their mysterious treasure. Nicholas kept to his account-books and his scrivening, lest he should drop the substance in pursuit of a shadow. But often, far into the night, he was busy with experiments in a secret laboratory, or poring, for the thousandth time, over the figures on the papyrus-leaves of his book, or the mystic characters engraved on its brazen cover. It was all in vain.

At last a bright thought struck Pernelle. If Nicholas were to paint, as exactly as possible, on the walls of their chamber the symbols of those fourth and fifth leaves, and invite some of the learned men of Paris to come and try to interpret them? This plan was speedily put in execution. There came doctors of divinity, jurists and physicians,—for what scholar in those days had not dabbled at least in the hermetic art? Most of them, finding they could make nothing of the signs, ridiculed the notary and his pictures. Others looked wise and talked learnedly, but had

no information to give. Pharaoh's magicians were not more nonplussed than these sages by the shapes of Flamel's dream.

One Anselm came repeatedly—expressed much interest—was eager to see the book itself. This request Flamel always refused, but he told him all he could himself explain of its method. On these data Anselm proceeded to give sundry interpretations and counsels for procedure in the great work. It would occupy six years, he said, to go through the whole process. Flamel believed him; and while pursuing his daily vocation, wrought at intervals for three times six years to no purpose. He and his Pernelle were growing staid middle-aged folk; but within those brass-covers lay the romance of their life, and they would not let it go.

At length it occurred to Nicholas that some one of the Jews in Spain, whose reputation as adepts in the cabalistic mysteries stood so high, might be able to afford him the desired information. The thought once entertained, he knew no peace till it was acted on. He made a copy of the figures to take with him; vowed a pilgrimage to Santiago; took pilgrim staff and scrip; and with a 'God speed' from Pernelle, is on his way to Spain. There he duly accomplished his vow; and was made acquainted, at Leon, with a certain physician, named Canches, a converted Jew. The Spaniard testified the utmost delight at the symbols which Flamel showed him; interpreted many of them, and instructed him in the secret meanings and the potent mysteries which (according to the cabalists) lay concealed in the Hebrew letters and the vowel-points. He accompanied Flamel on his way back to France, that he might see the wonderful book, of the existence whereof he said he was aware, but (with the learned men of his nation generally) had supposed it lost.

But the voyage brought on an illness, of which the unfortunate Canches died at Orleans. Flamel, reduced in purse but rich in knowledge, buried his friend as well as he could, and reached Paris in safety alone. Two paintings on the door of St. Jacques-de-la-Boucherie, just opposite his house, representing himself kneeling

on one side and his wife on the other, long remained to attest the gratitude of the pious couple.

And now Flamel has his long-wished-for *materia prima;* but not, even now, the preliminary preparation therefore. To arrive at this demands yet three years more of study and experiment. Then he has but to follow the directions of his book, and the work is done. He has left it on record that in the year of our Lord 1382, January 17th, about noon, being Monday, in his own house, Pernelle only being present, he, for the first time, made projection. The transmutation was effected on mercury; a pound and a half whereof, or thereabouts, he turned into pure silver, better than that of the mine, as was proved on the assaying of the same, both by himself and others.

On the 25th of April in the same year, at five in the afternoon, he effected projection of the red stone, this time producing gold of surpassing quality. And the way in which the final process of 'the magistery' was accomplished was as follows.

There were three furnaces, each with its crucible, wherein the 'green lion,' and the 'virgin's milk,' and the 'sophical mercury' had been duly mingled, with their kindred compounds, for many successive days, under the *regimina* of Mercury, Saturn, Luna, Venus, and Sol. There was, moreover, a circular glass vessel of great thickness, filled from time to time out of the alembic. And to see 'the operations of nature' within these vessels was indeed a wondrous and lovely sight. How the drops stood upon the brow of Nicholas as he regulated his fires, and compared the forms and colours that showed themselves in the liquids with the marginal diagrams in his book! How Pernelle stood by, helping, and muttering prayers and vows, and drawing now and then a great sigh of relief, as each regimen was successfully passed through, and the dangers escaped which might have marred all in a moment!

'Now,' cried Nicholas, reading from the book, 'after the citrine vapours, thou shalt observe a tincture of a violet colour; and after reiterate solution and coagulation, a gold colour changing into

green; and then—through certain cloudy hues, coming and passing, right pleasant to behold—into a red, which for its transcendent redness shall show blackish like unto congealed blood.'

'Glory be to Saint Jacques!' interrupted Pernelle, clasping her hands and looking up, 'all these we have seen in right order.'

Nicholas went on. 'Then wilt thou behold in the glass the floating islands and the tree of silver.'

'See, see,' cried Pernelle, 'there they are!'

And sure enough, as they watched the glass, they saw, circulating in the hyacinthine liquid, first one and then another bright flake, like a fragment of silver tissue; and these shot out tiny sprays and argent buds, and gathered about them bubbles of a green colour, like beads of emerald, which presently detached themselves, and floating to the surface, spread out there, changing into browns and reds, so that the liquid appeared covered with a fleet of autumn leaves.

At the end of two hours, the islands sank to the bottom; and out of the sparkling sediment there began to grow a shoot of silver, putting forth threadlike branches, which again divided themselves into finer filaments, till the lustrous arborescence filled the vessel with its network of glistening needle-points. Then, where the branching was thickest, there seemed to come a dimness, and these denser hazy spots began to flush faintly, and became like balls of crimson, and finally unfolded into fairy-roses. At the third hour the silver was dissolved; and the liquid, having absorbed it, changed from hyacinth to the yellow of sulphur. Afterwards, out of each rose there came a spark of almost intolerable brightness, like an atom of the sun. The rose-leaves fell apart, and the vessel was filled with the floating leaves and the dazzling particles, rising and falling, passing and repassing each other, as the currents in the working fluid carried them.

'Now,' read Nicholas, 'take of the blood of the green lion (which is the red wine of Lully), and adding in proportion to the argent vive taken at thy first imbibition, and the hardened centre of the residuum will be thy red stone.'

'You, Pernelle, must go to bed now,' said Nicholas, taking down a vial containing the precious red liquor. 'How you tremble!' and his own hand shook so that he could scarcely hold the bottle.

'And can you think I could close an eye at such a time?' answered she, almost reproachfully.

So they waited and watched with feverish eager eyes the final process. A strange conflict seemed to be going on within the vessel, as the ruddy liquor began to suffuse the primrose-coloured. A tiny glacier of crystals began to form itself on the sides of the glass. In the spiny recesses of this frost-work appeared minute forms, lizard-like,—salamanders, it seemed,—that crept about, and were most numerous where the red colour was deepest. Were they the vivified molecules of the mystic lion's blood? Soon they began to sport and leap among their crags of crystal, and to glide in and out among the bays and reefs and caverns of the rockwork. But what is going on at the surface? At the top of the vessel there is a bubbling and a knocking against the sealed lid. Then a growing thickness, like a honeycomb, overspreads it, from which there shoot downward, like roots, a multitude of waving arms, as of white cord; and at the end of each arm grow five white ends, or points,—as it were the hand of a skeleton,—exceeding small. Presently all the upper half of the vessel is alive with the undulating and waving to and fro of these lithe pendent arms. As the descending hands sweep the liquid lower and lower, there is alarm among the salamanders. Some dart at once into the crannies of the crystals, others swim wildly about, looking for a hiding-place; but most, shooting upwards, are seen trying to bite in sunder the diving arms. It is a deadly conflict. Whenever one of the skeleton-hands has grasped a salamander,—and they feel about and pursue them through every winding as though in every finger there were an eye,—that moment the salamander drops lifeless to the bottom. Whenever a salamander has bitten through the white filament on which the hand depends, the fingers are withered, or the severed extremity of the arm floats about powerless. Is this the final struggle between the

alchemic potencies of pallid Luna and fiery Mars? Long does the fight remain undecided. At one time not a salamander seems left; but the next moment numbers dart from their hiding-places, and, eluding the deadly hands, have fastened their teeth in the cordage of the arms. The salamanders are gaining the day. Under large portions of the surface, as he peeps beneath the lid, Nicholas sees that the arms have all been bitten off by the nimble creatures, and the stumps stand stiff and short like stubble. But in a moment a plunge is heard; a thick cloud seems to fill the glass, as though the coagulated surface had fallen in, and diffused its particles throughout the liquor. They can discern nothing. There is a hissing seething noise; a muffled sound, too, as of pressing and crying; and then all is still.

After due time, hearing no more indication of movement, and finding the glass quite cool, Flamel ventured carefully to unfasten the lid; and there at the bottom lay what seemed a fragment of rock, in the midst of a rust-coloured powder.

It was the RED STONE!

And now it were vain to attempt to describe the embraces, the tears of joy, the ecstatic thanksgivings and vows of the worthy pair. With this red stone they could 'tinge' huge masses of common metal, and transmute them into finest gold. It was, moreover, to its possessor a kind of sacrament. To discover it was never granted to the profane man or the sordid slave of gold. The search after it was a religious work. To possess it was to have received a sign of the Divine favour. Nay more, the stone itself was, as it were, a new channel of grace, whereby the soul was nourished, and man's fallen nature transformed and purified. As baser metals were redeemed into the supreme estate of gold, or Sol, so must the finder of the great secret be himself a redeemed man, assimilated to the Sun of Spirits—Deity. Such being the faith of the highest-minded genuine seekers of the philosopher's stone in those days, imagine with what zeal our Nicholas and his Pernelle would employ their new and inexhaustible resources in secret works of mercy; in

charities to the widow and the orphan; in the foundation of hospitals and churches; in the endowment and decoration of holy places. And what an amazing scope for their beneficence was opened, as they called to mind another wondrous property of their stone! By drinking from time to time of water in which it had been immersed, life was prolonged and youth renewed. It was endowed with a virtue that removed the shadow of the curse, and restored the life of its possessor to the length allotted man before he fell.

Well was it for Nicholas that his Pernelle was so cautious and so reserved. For they ran great risks. The mere suspicion that they possessed the secret had cost many men their lives. Their inability to make gold was interpreted as a refusal to communicate their knowledge; and death was the punishment of an imaginary contumacy. With all their care, the benefactions of the Flamels could not altogether escape notice, as disproportionate to the known means even of a notary in what would be called a flourishing way of business. Poor mad Charles VI. was prompted to send no less a person than Monsieur Cramoisy, his Master of Requests, to the scrivener of the Boucherie, to see whether he were really so rich as report said, and whether an extravagant court could not turn him somehow into gold. But the quick ears of Pernelle caught tidings of the danger, and precautions were duly taken. So when M. Cramoisy, in splendid trappings, suddenly darkened their door one morning, he saw Nicholas and his wife, surrounded by every evidence of the humblest means, sitting one on each side of a stool, on which stood a beechen platter full of boiled greens. They were safe; but still it might happen that another time they would not escape so easily. So Flamel resolved to take warning in time; and made preparations for quitting a city where so many powerful men n want of money were apt to become distressingly attentive. Great was the lamentation among the poor of the neighbourhood when they heard that the good Pernelle was sick nigh unto death; great the concourse which soon afterwards attended her obsequies, and inconsolable her bereaved husband. But the real Pernelle, disguised

in the habit of a charitable order, was meanwhile on the road to Switzerland, whither she arrived in health and safety. Some months afterwards, it was reported that Nicholas Flamel lay ill of an infectious disorder. Inquiries were many, but visitors few. At dead of night, Nicholas, disguised as his own undertaker, assisted at his own interment. Soon he too reaches the place of rendezvous, and embraces his Pernelle once more. From Switzerland they travelled to the East, lived many years at Broussa, and journeyed thence to the Indies.

More than two hundred years after the reputed death of Flamel, a certain *savan*, named Paul Lucas, who travelled in the East by order of Louis XIV., became acquainted, at Broussa, with a learned dervise from Usbec Tartary. Lucas tells us, in his book of travels dedicated to the Grand Monarque, that the said dervise (who talked an incredible number of languages with the greatest fluency) was, in appearance, about thirty years of age, but, from his conversation, at least a hundred. He told the Frenchman that he was one of seven friends who travelled to perfect their studies, and every twenty years met in a place previously agreed on. Four of them had already arrived at Broussa. The conversation fell on the cabala, alchemy, and the philosopher's stone. This last, remarked Lucas, was regarded by all men of sense as a mere fiction.

'The sage,' replied the dervise, 'is not shocked when he hears the ignorant speak thus. He lives serene and patient in the higher world of true science. He possesses riches beyond that of the greatest kings; but he lives temperately above the power of events.'

'With all these fine maxims,' interrupted Lucas, 'your sage dies like other folk.'

'Alas, I perceive you have never had so much as a glimpse of the true wisdom. The sage must die at last—for he is human; but, by the use of the true medicine, he can ward off whatever might hinder or impair the animal functions for a thousand years.'

'Do you mean to tell me that all who have discovered the stone have lived for a thousand years?'

'They might have done so, certainly, with proper care.'

'You have heard, doubtless,' said Lucas, 'of an adept named Nicholas Flamel, who lived long ago in Paris, and founded several churches and charities. The arch he built in the cemetery of the Holy Innocents, with the figure of himself reading, and a number of hieroglyphic figures, remains to this day; and so do other sculptures and erections of his. Is not he dead, then?'

'Dead!' said the dervise, with a grave smile. 'He, and his wife too, are alive at this hour. It is not above three years since I left both the one and the other in the Indies. He is one of my best friends.'

And the dervise then proceeded to relate to his astonished auditor the substance of the narrative given above.

Nicholas Flamel and his wife are historical personages. The sculptures on the churches, to which allusion has been made, were to be seen in 1742, according to the testimony of Langlet Dufresnoy. Certain books, too, have come down, bearing his name: a *Summary of Philosophy*, in French verse, after the manner of the *Romance of the Rose;* a comment on the hieroglyphics he erected; also an account of his wonderful book, and his success in projection three several times. Some of our readers may feel curious to know what is the probable substratum of fact underlying that investiture of the marvellous which has rendered him almost mythical.

For the satisfaction of such, we quote the following passage from a note in Michelet's *History of France* (vol. ii. p. 15, G. H. Smith's *Trans.*): 'This church (Saint Jacques) lying between Notre Dame and St. Martin's, which both laid claim to it, was exceedingly independent, and constituted a redoubtable asylum, not to be violated with impunity. It was this induced the crafty Flamel, who exercised his profession of writer, or copyist, without belonging to, or authority from, the university, to sit down under the shadow of St. Jacques, where he could be protected by the curé of that day,—a man of consideration, clerk (*greffier*) to the parliament, and who

enjoyed the cure, though not a priest. Flamel squatted there for thirty years, in a stall five feet long and three wide; and throve so well by his labour, ready ingenuity, and underhand practices, that at his death it took a chest larger than his stall to hold the title-deeds of his property. Beginning with his pen and a fine hand-writing as his sole capital, he married an old woman with some money. Under cover of one trade, he drove on many. Whilst copying out the beautiful manuscripts which we still admire, it is probable that in this quarter, inhabited by rich ignorant butchers, Lombards, and Jews, he contrived to get many other documents written. Work, too, would be brought him by a curé who was *greffier* to the parliament. The value of instruction beginning to be felt, the lords to whom he sold his beautiful manuscripts employed him to teach their children. He bought a few houses. At first, worth little, on account of the flight of the Jews and the general misery, these houses gradually rise in value. The tide setting in from the country to Paris, Flamel turned the times to account. He converted these houses into lodging-houses (*hospitia*, hospices), letting them out at moderate rents. The gains which then came in to him from so many sources gave rise to the saying, that he could make gold. He let them say so, and perhaps favoured the report, in order to increase the sale of his books. However, occult arts were not without their danger; and hence Flamel's unceasing anxiety to placard his piety on the doors of churches, where he was ever seen carved in basso-relievo, kneeling, together with his wife Pernelle, before the cross. And in this he found a double advantage; he sanctified his fortune, and increased it by giving publicity to his name. See the learned and ingenious Abbé Vilain's *Histoire de Saint-Jacques la Boucherie*, 1758; and his *Histoire de Nicolas Flamel*, 1761.'

INDIA IN 1857: HISTORICAL PARALLELS.*

THOMAS BUCKHURST, Lord Sackville, wrote his *Mirror of Magistrates* in the last years of Queen Mary's reign, a melancholy poem in a melancholy time. He had witnessed the death of so many great men, and of so many good, on the scaffold or at the stake, that his mind became filled with the images of fallen grandeur and of suffering goodness. He took a mournful pleasure in summoning out of the past instances of misfortune like unto those which so saddened him in the present. He placed his hand in the hand of Sorrow, and was led by her—like another Dante by his Beatrice—into the unseen world. There his 'Induction' tells us how he heard from the lips of men once famous in council or in arms the story of the treachery that pulled down one, of the ingratitude that abandoned another, of the calamity that overtook them all.

Were not such reminiscences quite natural? The minds of many of us own the same law of association, and take a like direction at a time such as this, when England sits sorrowing, like the patriarch of old, while messenger after messenger comes hurrying in to fling down at her feet his burden of bereavement, shame, and horror. In our amazement and indignation we desire to bring the past to remembrance, as we ask: Was there ever before a treason of such a kind? Did ever human creatures elsewhere so utterly put off the man and put on the fiend? Of all the great empires of the world, was there ever one that left her children in such over-confidence to the protection of a subject enemy,—ever one that lost them in such multitudes by a stroke so fell and dastardly?

What a different word is now the word *massacre*, when we meet with it in the pages of a history! Once it was a general designation, only too indifferently pronounced. The term was like an unexploded shell, hiding death in its heart, but apparently cold and

* From the *National Magazine.*

harmless, nowise terrible. Now we realize it; we see in it the shell as it bursts asunder; the compact and single word scatters into a thousand instances of anguish and of death. We learn to estimate details; we imagine the processes of cruelty when we hear of its results; we reckon up the items that swell the dreadful total.

What wonder, then, that some of the most tragic passages in history should seem most in keeping with our present mood of mind? Prosperous scenes and periods, with their pastoral uplands, busy marts, and festival pageants, have grown unreal and remote. They are parts of the historic panorama that have receded now from the focus of our vision; while the darker features, and those most similar to our present calamities, are projected towards us, magnified in form and heightened in colour. The annals of massacre present us with much that resembles, with nothing that surpasses, this Indian outbreak. Other massacres, greater in extent, have been less painful in some of their circumstances; or where scarcely less atrocious in their treachery, less formidable in significance, and less widely-spread in compass.

Imagine—and it is not now difficult—the horrors of that day in Rome, when some swift courier from the last homeward trireme, just landed at Brundusium, brought word that secret orders from Mithridates had commanded on a certain day the slaughter of every Roman and every Italian throughout Asia Minor,—that the secret had been kept, the massacre perpetrated, without distinction of sex or age, the bodies thrown out to the vultures and the dogs,—that not less, it might be supposed, than a hundred and fifty thousand souls had fallen victims to this master-stroke of Asiatic cruelty and craft! Think how the senators, sad and stern, would take counsel, feeling that the name of Roman in the East had sustained a terrible shock, that must be terribly avenged! The equestrian order and the moneyed men see ruin close at hand; all that thronging populace would fain arm and sail on the instant; a muttered vow of vengeance is on every lip. Women go home to weep, stricken with the sense of widowhood as by a pestilence. A mighty power

had that Pontic king,—a worthy foe for all the strength of Rome,—the last representative of the great Macedonian empire, so strong in undying hatred of the Roman name, in stores of treasure, in alliances and fleets and armies, in exhaustless fertility of resource. But his fall was sure, though long delayed. On the ruins of his greatness Rome founded larger empire in that golden East, and extorted wealth that more than recompensed her losses. She reached the height of her power after a disaster which seemed to shake its very foundation. The close of the Mithridatic war was the culminating point of her real greatness. The Anglo-Saxon will not accomplish less than the Roman, for his destinies are higher. The situation of Rome was in one respect more difficult than ours, for she found all the resources of the East combined and arrayed against her by a single mind of indomitable energy. Our Indian adversaries lack a head, and act with little concert; for the King of Delhi is but a name about which revolt may rally, and Nena Sahib is only a partisan leader, not the centre of control. On the other hand, the Romans were not betrayed and assailed by Asiatics furnished with Roman arms and trained to Roman discipline. The superiority of the West is already not less decisive on the part of Britain than of Rome. All that the legionaries of Lucullus and of Pompey were to the turbaned hosts of Mithridates, that, and even more, have been the Highlanders of Havelock to the mutineers under Nena Sahib.

Some conspiracies, which, if successful, would have changed the face of history, have failed upon the very brink of action. They resemble those coral structures which rise (the work of innumerable insects) from the secret depths of the ocean, but stop at the surface; for the architects perish as soon as they emerge into the air. Such was the conspiracy of the Pazzi, in Florence, to exterminate the family of Medici; and such that remarkable plot of one Cinadon for the massacre of the Spartans. Xenophon relates the contrivance by which the ephors succeeded in suppressing this dangerous conspiracy of men 'who were ready to eat them raw,' and in suppress-

ing it with such speed and secrecy that the capital knew of the crime only by the spectacle of punishment. Verily, never was government so clad as that of Sparta in cap of darkness and shoes of swiftness. The Venetian oligarchy was not more awful in mystery; the emissaries of the Secret Tribunal not more stealthy and inevitable; the Assassins from the Old Man of the Mountain less ubiquitous. The other day, Sir John Lawrence detected and punished a nascent plot still more secretly and swiftly; but Sir John Lawrence had at his command the electric telegraph.

Two successful massacres stand prominent in history, both perpetrated by a vanquished nation on an invading enemy,—the massacre of the Danes in our own island, and that slaughter of the French conquerors of Sicily known by the name of the Sicilian Vespers. Of these, the latter eventually emancipated the people from an intolerable yoke; the former only aggravated their sufferings, was as short-sighted as it was cruel.

The sluggard King Ethelred buys a third respite with a ruinous tribute, and then sends secret letters out, ordering a general massacre for the ninth of July. Our Anglo-Saxon forefathers were secret and pitiless. The stroke fell most heavily on the Danes who had settled down peaceably among them, not on the new-comers about the coasts, who had just committed fresh depredations, and were eager for more. Gunhildis, the sister of Sweyn, was not spared, though she and the earl her husband had embraced Christianity. She saw her husband and her young son butchered before her face, and was then beheaded, foretelling (as it came to pass) that her death would cost England dear. The murderers had been stung to the most indiscriminate fury by every atrocity of barbarous outrage. But we read of no elaborate ingenuities of torture.

The Sicilians—that nation of husbandmen and shepherds—were goaded to their deed of blood by a rapacity of taxation surpassed scarcely anywhere in history. Only the petulant presumption of a Charles of Anjou could have supposed that human beings would endure it tamely. Yet in more than one place the Sicilians had

spared the lives of their tormentors and suffered them to depart unharmed. Charles of Anjou had to witness, with gestures of impotent rage, the burning of that fleet which was to have conquered Constantinople; and Sicily was lost to France.

We have not driven a nation to madness by a taxation that has made every man's life a burden. We have never by barbarous ravage provoked the reprisals of treachery and torture. The hatred which rages against us in the heart of the Hindoo is the rage of a creature credulous as a child. It is not for what we have *done*, but for what the Mohammedan has persuaded him we were *going to do*, that he is now so athirst for the blood of every 'Feringhee.' It is not the people of Hindostan who have risen against us. Whatever may have been our faults, it cannot be denied that we have protected and benefited that people while we have taxed them. It is the sepoy army only that has dreamt of our extermination,—the men whom we have humoured till they detected our weakness and felt their own strength. The opportunity we have afforded them will be a marvel to all time. This is a fact unparalleled in history,—that a nation should annex province after province and expect to hold them in security almost solely by means of troops taken from the subject provincials themselves. Our traditional policy has been a singular mixture of concession and contempt. When we conceded so much as we did to their prejudices, we should have abated a little of our contempt for their powers.

SECTION II.

Fragments of Criticism.

Thackeray's 'Esmond.'

NO small expectation was awakened when it was announced that the author of *Vanity Fair* was about to appear before us in a new walk of fiction. The period selected was one of great and varied interest. He had already portrayed with skill its literary characteristics, in a course of lectures recently delivered. It remained to be seen how far the art which had depicted so successfully times present, or very near our own, would add to its triumphs among scenes and characters more remote. The new work could neither be assisted nor injured by the fragmentary method of monthly publication. It would be written, as it would be read, at once. It would probably be carefully matured and harmonized throughout—'teres atque rotundus.'

Taken as a whole, *Esmond* will not disappoint those who are best able to appreciate the real excellence of this popular author. The devourer of novels, greedy for mere excitement, will pronounce the book heavy. The action is, indeed, in some parts much too tardy. The preface, and the introductory part of the story, though well written, introduce the characters awkwardly. The reader wishes for a genealogical tree of this confusing Castlewood family, and only begins fairly to enjoy that part of the book on a second reading. An author should endeavour to interest his readers as early as pos-

sible in the actors of his piece. He should never cool their ardour or dissipate their good-humour by any needless difficulty at the outset. We should not be initiated in the secrets of a story, as the candidate of old in the arcana of Egyptian priestcraft, through a porchway of grievous preliminary probation. Mystery allures us onward—it is the veil upon the statue. Obscurity repels—it is as though the author chose a foggy morning for our day's journey in his company. We do not travel very far, however, with Mr. Thackeray's *Esmond*, before the sun breaks out, and we thoroughly enjoy ourselves.

Many novels which open with the pretence of being household narratives, belie their name ere long, and lose all verisimilitude, by a change of style or plot quite at variance with the title they bear. The fiction of an autobiography is felt to be a mere trick. The family story is like a text, taken, not to be expounded, but abandoned; not as the theme of the discourse, but as the point *from* which it is to diverge. The hero who tells the tale is discovered, before the end of the first volume, to be *possessed* by the novelist—his individuality is merged in that of the author, and it is he who reflects, describes, or satirizes. Mr. Thackeray has succeeded perfectly in his disguise. The book does read more like a family memoir than a novel. The scenes of *Vanity Fair* and *Pendennis* were crowded with characters. Here the interest centres upon two or three. The action embraces the best part of a life-time. The pathos is that of secret home-sorrow, the incidents such as were happening every day. If, in not a few places, the reflections of Esmond are obviously a vehicle for the pensive and desponding satire of Thackeray, the writer is at least free from the fault of having selected as his representative a character to whom such thoughts would be uncongenial. It would be most unreasonable to require of an author, so circumstanced, that he should deny his nature, and divest himself of that idiosyncrasy which stamps his productions as his own. It is sufficient to demand that he should not be himself in the wrong place—that he should not be unnaturally natural. This law Mr. Thackeray has satisfactorily obeyed.

There is this great difference between Scott and his imitators in the management of the historical novel: he wrote with a mind stored already with the requisite historic and antiquarian lore; they have, for the most part, visibly 'crammed' for the occasion. Their personages resemble the man smothered in the crowd, described by Fuller as 'perfect and entire, wanting nothing but breath.' They are painfully accurate in costume and detail. All Meyrick's ancient armour clatters down upon their pages—bascinet and camail, testieres, guiges, plastrons, jupons, jambeaux,—we are not spared a single strap or rivet. Their descriptions are frivolously pedantic as the frisks, turns, and demi-pommadas of Captain Tripet in his famous battle with Gymnast. As Corporal Trim said, 'one home-thrust with the bayonet is worth them all.' No breathing, tangible body fills out these trophies of accoutrement; and, like the empty suits of ancestral armour which stood round the drinking-hall of old King Biorn, the plumed casques enclose only shadows. Now of any approach to this sin, Mr. Thackeray is perfectly clear; he knows where to stop. Having well digested large information previously acquired, he selects with judgment. Without the parade of intimacy, he displays a familiarity with the characters and habits of the time, the manifest result of thoughtful, discriminating study. Here are no laced coats and hoops enclosing names and nothing more. When Walter Scott was about to write *Nigel*, he sent up to town for Derham's *Artificial Clock-maker*. He wanted the book for the character of old David Ramsay, the watchmaker, a man who can scarce talk or hear of anything but his beloved clocks. Yet after such pains to be accurate, Scott allows the dreaming mechanist but a few sentences here and there. An inferior hand, with such an idea and such a mine of terminology, would have thrust him in times without number, and wearied the reader (as much as he did George Heriot) with his perpetual pins and wheels, escapements and calculations. Mr. Thackeray displays, in this respect, the same intuitive sense of fitness. His descriptions, whether unlaboured or elaborately terse, are coloured, as by a master, in a few strong touches. He never stops in his course, or wanders

from it, to hold up to our admiration some choice specimen from the curiosities of literature. We could well have exchanged some of the scenes in those interminable continental campaigns for a peep into the literary coffee-houses of the day, while Mr. Thackeray rekindled for us those coruscations of wit which made there the mimic lightning that played under the clouds of tobacco-smoke. But, with this exception, the great writers of that period could not have been introduced more largely without injury to that unity of purpose which pervades the work. The excellences of the book should be estimated by a consideration of what it is not, as well as by the appreciation of what it actually is. The language of Mr. Thackeray is that of the age he depicts. It is by his style throughout, and not by masses of detail, heaped up here and there by the way, and obstructing the course of the story, that he evinces his complete acquaintance with those times. The structure of the sentences—now their involution, their parenthesis, their pendent clauses (which with us would be separate sentences)—now their manly idiomatic simplicity, their vigour sometimes, and mostly their graceful ease—all combine to transport us irresistibly to the days of Addison and Steele. As a work of art—in thought, in harmony, in finish—*Esmond* ranks greatly above anything which Mr. Thackeray has yet produced. Some writers endeavour to divert the scrutinizing eye of criticism by clothing their ideas in a dress confessedly careless, somewhat as the Egyptian mother suffers her child to go abroad in a squalid and disorderly attire, that the evil eye may not rest upon and harm it. Not so Mr. Thackeray. He is neither so impatient nor so self-satisfied, as to shrink from taking pains. The characteristics of a particular style are often more strikingly exhibited in a clever imitation than in the original itself. Thus the student who would excel in Latin prose composition, is directed to study, not only Cicero, but also the best writers of Latin in modern times. In the same way, *Esmond* might be read, apart from its other merits, as a new model of an old style—as a refresh-

ing revival, in our hurrying, headlong days, of that calm and statelier cast of expression so long since out of date.

A word or two on some of the principal characters in this story. All are drawn with ability, but not all with an ability equally well bestowed. On some much skill is thrown away, and their faulty design and incongruous elements refuse to be veiled by the graceful diction and sparkling dialogue through which they are presented. Lady Castlewood is designed to win from us an admiration only short of that loving homage paid her through life by Esmond himself. The reader will probably respect her more than the Helen of *Pendennis*, but will love her less than Laura. Gentle and wise as she is declared to be, her heart is revealed to us as full of petty jealousies. She gives way to outbursts of feeling, to a passionate injustice which jars painfully with the rest of the nature assigned to her. Three times—once, when he has caught the infection; again, when she suspects that he is a messenger from her husband; and a third time, when he is in prison for the duel—does she address Esmond in the most cruel language woman could devise; she hisses out her words, she stamps upon the ground—the angel is mournfully transformed by fury. At the very time when she is in anguish of soul for her husband's death, and when the only feeling (except sorrow) powerful within her is an unreasonable anger against Esmond, she is described as cutting a gold button from his sleeve, which she wore ever after next her heart. Her affections appear to have strayed towards him while her husband yet lived. It is undesirable, on the score of taste, to take no higher ground, that a leading personage, elaborately portrayed as worthy of such love as is rendered to the very ideal of womanhood, should be stained by feelings such as these.

Esmond, again, provokes us by the want of spirit with which he endures from her the most ungrounded reproaches. Instead of resenting their cruelty, and manfully justifying himself, he is utterly crushed and spirit-broken by her vehemence. His abject devotion

for years to a woman like Beatrix, who, if possessed of a heart at all, had none for him—with whom union would, he knew, be certain misery—lowers him irretrievably in the opinion of the reader. Mr. Thackeray seems to have been conscious of this danger. Again and again he is careful to assure us that the greatest and the best of men—all mankind, in short—must be victimized, sooner or later, in the same fashion. Nothing is so repeatedly asserted in the book—let no one think of escaping this doom. But the dictum is not true. Powerful natures are bound by this spell—commit a thousand follies, only less foolish than the passion which is their parent—are ready to turn Beltenebros, and live like a savage in a cave, because Oriana has written a cruel letter; but the fever burns itself out, reason makes itself heard, and love grows more elevated as it is less fantastic. The feebler the character, the longer is the Werter period protracted. Esmond is generous, personally brave, with glowing, enduring passion smouldering under a grave and phlegmatic exterior, but defective in energy of character. With an almost feminine facility, he is led this way and that by his feelings. His generosity in the matter of his title was the first-fruit of love;—love determined his politics, love gave him ambition, love impelled him to adventure and intrigue. Everywhere he is the creature of circumstances. It is true that a like passivity is observable, and has been blamed, in many of Walter Scott's heroes, from Waverley downwards. They are polished billiard-balls, pushed about by the more stirring actors in the great events of the time. But then Scott's heroes do not, like Esmond, tell their own story, or fill so large a portion of the canvas; neither are they endowed with those attributes of matured thoughtfulness, those ripened habits of calm reflection, with which Esmond is invested. Esmond is a strictly natural character. There are such men—men capable of noble self-sacrifice, yet destitute of the ardour and the strength which press life into the service of a great and worthy purpose, and conquer by a wise enthusiasm. But the desirableness of making choice of such a man for the hero whom we are to esteem so highly, is very questionable. The position of Esmond between the mother

and the daughter,—confiding his passion for the child to the ear of the parent, who is tortured by secret jealousy, and at last discovering that his truest love has all along been given to the elder lady, whom he marries in the sequel—this is not a pleasing picture, and in hands less able would have been simply repulsive.

Beatrix is a specimen of a type of female character repeatedly introduced by Mr. Thackeray. It is a mistake to say, however, that she is merely Becky in silver-clocked stockings, high-heeled shoes, and surmounted by some one of those ever-changing head-dresses which Addison declared the most variable thing in nature, having risen and fallen within his own memory above thirty degrees. Becky, Blanche Amory, and Beatrix, are distinct species of one peculiar genus. The pliant meannesses of Becky, and the hypocritical sentimentalism of Blanche, would have been alike impossible to the proud, cold-hearted, audacious Beatrix. This most faulty character is drawn faultlessly. The scene in which she is counselled by the family to leave the dangerous vicinity of the prince, and confronts them all in turn with a spirit and an art that remind us of Vittoria Corombona, is one of the most masterly Mr. Thackeray has imagined. It is much to be regretted that our author, either from inadequate acquaintance, or some radical misogynism, should persist in representing women almost exclusively under two aspects — either as heartless, if possessed of brains; or else as defective in understanding and in action, if rich in the warm and generous endowments of the heart. Mr. Thackeray seems to fear that the mean is rare between the henpecked husband and the tyrant. He appears to have sought in vain, in the other sex, for a combination of amiable and energetic qualities, of goodness and of talent. For our part, we hold a happier creed on this matter. But we shall say no more, lest that wicked sceptic we review should be malicious enough to suspect that we reviewers are domestically reviewed, and have been put up by our womankind to assume the cudgels in their defence, on pain of being asked 'what we call ourselves?'

We are sorry to see Mr. Thackeray speaking with the levity he

does of the youthful vices of Frank Castlewood. He says he is not going to play the moralist, and cry 'Fie!' But excesses, among which (if some hints do not mislead us) seduction must be numbered, are not surely to be thus lightly treated. The author has forgotten himself for a moment. It was very different in his last novel. Surely he will not himself adopt the ethical code of Major Pendennis. He kept Pen, with all his follies, pure from such contamination. In a passage where we seem to hear the author in *propriâ personâ*, Esmond should be made not less true in his sense of purity than was the biographer of Arthur Pendennis. No doubt that age was less strict in language and in practice. Yet this fact would justify no one in writing a novel with a moral no better than that of *Tom Jones*. It is possible to indicate the temperament of an age in this respect, without seeming to share or to approve its maxims. The extinction of Frank in matrimony is highly amusing, and meant, it may be, as a kind of poetical justice. Hear Beatrix describe the manœuvre in her lively way:—

"I made that onslaught on the priests, in order to divert my poor dear mother's anguish about Frank. Frank is as vain as a girl, cousin. Talk of us girls being vain, what are *we* to you? It was easy to see that the first woman who chose would make a fool of him, or the first robe—I count a priest and a woman all the same. We are always caballing; we are not answerable for the fibs we tell; we are always cajoling and coaxing, or threatening; and we are always making mischief, Colonel Esmond—mark my word for that, who know the world, sir, and have to make my way in it. I see as well as possible how Frank's marriage hath been managed. The count, our papa-in-law, is always away at the coffee-house. The countess, our mother, is always in the kitchen looking after the dinner. The countess, our sister, is at the spinet. When my lord comes to say he is going on the campaign, the lovely Clotilda bursts into tears, and faints so; he catches her in his arms—no, sir, keep your distance, cousin, if you please—she cries on his shoulder, and he says, 'O, my divine, my adored, my beloved Clotilda, are you sorry to part with me?' 'O, my Francisco,' says she, 'O, my lord!' and at this very instant mamma and a couple of young brothers, with mustachios and long rapiers, come in from the kitchen, where they have been eating bread and onions. Mark my word, you will have all this woman's relations at Castlewood three months after she has arrived there. The old count and countess, and the young counts, and all the

little countesses her sisters. Counts! every one of these wretches says he is a count. Guiscard, that stabbed Mr. Harvey, said he was a count; and I believe he was a barber. All Frenchmen are barbers—fiddle-dee! don't contradict me—or else dancing masters, or else priests;' and so she rattled on.'

Lord Castlewood is a life-like figure, a fair sample of the fuddled, fox-hunting, cock-fighting, spendthrift, good-hearted, high-spirited squire or noble in the so-called good old times. The family group which occupies the first volume possesses a charm and mournful interest which deepens into pathos at the close, when poor Castlewood dies more nobly than he had lived. The dowager Viscountess Esmond, with her half-French jargon, her rouge and cards, her love of priests and politics, of intrigue and of King James, her reminiscences of by-gone gallantry, is a sketch executed *con amore* by Mr. Thackeray. She talks in this style:—

'And she has shut her door on you—given the living to that horrid young cub, son of that horrid old bear, Tusher, and says she will never see you more. Monsieur mon neveu—we are all like that. When I was a young woman, I'm positive that a thousand duels were fought about me. And when poor Monsieur de Souchy drowned himself in the canal at Bruges, because I danced with Count Springbock, I couldn't squeeze out a single tear, but danced till five o'clock the next morning. 'Twas the Count—no, 'twas my Lord Ormond that played the fiddles, and his Majesty did me the honour of dancing all night with me. How you are grown! You have got the *bel air*. You are a black man. Our Esmonds are all black. The little prude's son is fair; so was his father—fair and stupid. You were an ugly little wretch when you came to Castlewood—you were all eyes, like a young crow. We intended you should be a priest. That awful Father Holt—how he used to frighten me when I was ill! I have a comfortable director now—the Abbé Douillete—a dear man. We make meagre on Fridays always. My cook is a devout, pious man. You, of course, are of the right way of thinking. They say the Prince of Orange is very ill indeed.'

As to the historical personages, we have a *vera effigies* of that thorough Stuart, Prince James, who is well introduced in the third volume,—unworthy, as were all his house, of that high-souled infatuation which would have served him with success could he have served himself. Swift appears in a single scene, insolent and brutal, stalks off with his Irish porter, and we see him no more.

Marlborough receives hard measure, as he deserves. Mr. Thackeray's estimate of his character is given in a powerfully written passage, exhibiting, in the strongest relief, the strange contrasts of a nature whose memory is associated with so much obloquy and so much renown. The secrets of poor Steele's domestic life are opened to us, and we behold him tippling and henpecked. It is touching to see him filled with such reverence for Addison, without a particle of respect for himself.

This novel, true to the character of Esmond, is serious throughout—presenting scarcely a vestige of that comic element which sparkles at intervals in the other productions of the author. The *dénouement* is unpleasing. Esmond is the worst in plot and best in expression of all Mr. Thackeray's writings. Female character is even less charitably treated than in former fictions. Mr. Thackeray's portraits are like daguerreotypes, which never represent the faces of men in their most favourable aspect, but are almost invariably unjust to women, owing to the undue strength of shadow. In spite of these faults, the book will win and will retain the attention of the thoughtful by its instructive exhibitions of the pathology of the heart, by many a grave lesson eloquently uttered, —will endear itself to every reader of taste by an indescribable charm,—and will probably survive in our literature almost every similar work of its time.

Baumgarten's 'Acts of the Apostles,' &c. German Theology.

'WHAT are the bells ringing for?' asked a man one day of an Irishman he met. Quoth the Hibernian, 'Faith, and it's only a singing in me ears that I'm troubled with.' Now let the reader gravely mark wherein Pat's mistake consisted. Was it not in this, that he inferred the objective from the subjective? Impressions which had their reality only in his own consciousness, he transferred to the consciousness of others. His individual auditory experience was assumed as the normal and universal one. A similar misconception has prevailed but too extensively, both in the philo-

sophy and the theology of Germany. The sage pronounces concerning the harmonies of the universe as though they were but the echoes of the sounds which chime in the belfry of his solitary brain. The discord of the upper and lower worlds—the perplexing interaction of the great antagonisms of existence—is to be reconciled in reality on the principle by which his own imagination sets the rivals at one again. He states their quarrel for them; he commands peace. Like mine host of the 'Garter' appeasing Parson Evans and Doctor Caius, he cries magniloquently, 'Give me thy hand, terrestrial; so:—Give me thy hand, celestial; so:—' and every Justice Shallow says, 'Follow, gentlemen; follow.'

Germany has 'followed' her philosophers long, to little purpose. We have been happy to observe of late some signs of a disposition to draw back and take another course. Sancho begins to doubt whether his Don Quixote will ever be able really to present him with the island so often promised. A more practical tendency has assumed the ascendant. Even philosophical theologians have learnt to recognise in this excessive subjectivity a fundamental error—to look more duly at facts, less complacently at ideas. On the subjective principle the scientific divine starts with the axiom—I, as a Christian, am myself the material of systematic theology. He evolves his theology, like his metaphysics, out of himself. Christianity becomes, accordingly, either so much mere feeling, or so much mere metaphysical and ethical process. This method has been fairly tried. Its validity has at last been called in question. It has been virtually, if not formally, abandoned by some names of no mean mark in the theological world of Germany. The fact is significant, that the same year which produced the able work before us, witnessed also the publication of a systematic theology by Hofmann, which arrives at results the very opposite of those of Schleiermacher, and is almost everywhere right where he is wrong.*

* The reader of German is referred to a discriminating review of this important work in the *Theol. Studien und Kritiken.*

In Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* the Christian consciousness occupies the whole of the two octavo volumes. In Hofmann's *Schriftbeweis* it is done within one-and-twenty pages. All the rest is history. He holds that we can apprehend the nature of Christianity, not by scrutinizing what the individual feels, but by the study of all that God has done and does for our salvation. Accordingly, he refuses to divorce the New Testament from the Old. The Hebrew history is by him as much honoured as it has been undervalued by most of his predecessors. He is not too proud of his intellect to suffer the Almighty to go first. He is willing that the Infinite should have room to speak and to work, while man stands reverently by to hearken and to watch. He does not, like Schleiermacher, play fast and loose with the sacred record; and, while laying stress on the fact of Christ's appearance, tell us that his resurrection and ascension are open questions, and that it is a mere matter of taste whether we believe in a personal or an impersonal God. He acknowledges all the books of Scripture as the Lutheran Church receives them. He justly maintains that the work of Christ can rightly be understood only when taken in connexion with that course of divine instruction which preceded and which followed his personal ministry and sacrifice. But all these consequents and antecedents are left by Schleiermacher in obscurity as non-essentials in our Christian consciousness. Again, ever since the ascendancy of Hegel's system, with its ever-recurring Triads, the scientific theology of Germany has been labouring to establish on philosophical principles the doctrine of an immanent Trinity. The Trinity their philosophy has given them resembles the Trinity of Scripture as little as did the Trinity of Plotinus. But, notwithstanding, their systems of divinity have been ruled and arranged by this dogma. This is the case with Martensen, the case with Liebner. Hofmann has broken away from such influences, and perceives that these structures are built only upon air. He acknowledges that we know nothing whatever of a Trinity except as revealed with reference to the plan of salvation. The

prominence given by Hofmann to the historic element appears to be in some respects excessive, and is certainly inconsistent with a starting-point so nearly identical with that of Schleiermacher. It will rest with some other theologian to advance in the right direction beyond him, as he (to his high praise be it spoken) has distanced his predecessors.

Thus experience is leading German theology away from its greatest danger. The conflicting responses of the oracular Ego have awakened just suspicion. Setting out from the same subjective point of origin, one man resolves Scripture into consciousness, and another consciousness into Scripture; one man finds religion all feeling, another all fact, a third all process. The results condemn the method. Thoughtful minds begin to ask, can this elastic, this Protean *Me*, which assumes shapes so various, be possibly the sole and self-sufficient principle it is represented? Can it furnish at all, in itself, an adequate foundation for Christianity? May we not have been wrong in saying all this while that a man must first construct in his own mind an idea of how God ought to act in his self-manifestation, and then go to Scripture, and receive it in as far as it seems to show that the All-wise has acted according to the scheme drawn out for him? May not our glory prove in the end to have been our blunder, our gain our loss? It is amusing to see Germany beginning to abandon an error into which many among ourselves, at this very time, fancy it so vastly philosophical to rush headlong.

The reader will now understand the position of the author of the work under notice, when we say that he is one of a school or class of interpreters among whom Hofmann may be said to occupy the post of leader. These three volumes are, in fact, an elaborate commentary on the Acts of the Apostles. Dr. Baumgarten divides his material into three books—I. the Church among the Jews; II. the Church in transition from the Jews to the Heathen; III. the Church among the Heathen. The books again are subdivided into sections, as, for example, in the second—the Diffusion of the Gospel apart from the Ministry of the Apostles (embracing cap. viii. 1—4);

Philip the Deacon in Samaria (viii. 5—24); Philip baptizes the Ethiopian chamberlain (viii. 25—40); Conversion and Commission of Saul of Tarsus (ix. 1—30); &c. This plan is a good one, and such an arrangement greatly facilitates the study of the narrative as a whole. It would have been an improvement if the headings of the pages, at least on one side, had indicated the chapter and verse treated of below. As it is, the reader who may consult the work for a particular passage has to search about among the closely-printed pages of an entire section. There should have been also an index to the Scripture passages explained. These matters of convenience are of secondary importance, no doubt; but authors, and especially German authors, should consider how much the acceptance and serviceableness of their productions may depend on their saving readers all unnecessary trouble.

It is only of late years that German criticism, which has left so little unexplored, has begun to devote due attention to the Book of the Acts. The chronology of the apostolic records generally has been scrutinized, but without especial reference to the continuity and import of this particular narrative. Neander did, indeed, bring his great powers to a large department in this field, but, with that exception, the book has met with treatment, from two opposite quarters, singularly inadequate. Those who have believed in the authenticity of its account have confessed that they found in it no plan or consecutive purpose. Those, on the other hand, who have endeavoured to evolve the unity of its design as a whole, have impugned its authenticity. The first class resemble a man who, having to show to wanderers some lordly house and grounds, calls their attention, now to a picture and now to a statue, here to a flower-bed and there to a fountain, but fails to explain the design of the arrangement within or without, and never leads them to the spot from whence, through an opening in the trees, the wood, the water, and the lawn, are seen at a view, forming that landscape of which the stately mansion is the centre. The second class undertake the office of cicerone only to depreciate what they propose to

exhibit. They show the visitor the whole, but it is only to point out imagined incongruities. They tell him that the most valued pictures are mere copies,—the most striking adornments seldom genuine,—the whole in wretched taste,—nay, more, do hint, with not a few omniscient shrugs, that every timber in the structure is crumbling with dry-rot, and the building likely enough at any moment to tumble on the heads of its inmates. Such is, in fact, the upshot of the elaborate criticism bestowed by Baur and by Zeller on this portion of the New Testament. Dr. Baumgarten proposes to occupy the wide intermediate space which lies between conclusions so defective in comprehensiveness, on one side, and candour on the other. Acknowledging the inspiration of the book, he endeavours to enter into its design as a whole,—to elucidate the sequence of its incidents,—and to trace the progress of the infant Church under the promised conduct of its ascended Head. Some purpose it must have, unless (as he somewhat drily remarks) we are to admit that lack of unity and design is among the credentials of an inspired history, and that the Divine Author, to whom it must ultimately be referred, is not a spirit, but a something. In this worthy enterprise he has been in great measure successful. His solution, for example, of the seeming discrepancies in the three accounts of Paul's conversion (which our Tübingen adversaries have pointed out with such malicious glee), is at once simple and conclusive. On the other hand, a somewhat novel interpretation which he gives of Acts ix. 5, appears to us highly improbable, and inconsistent with the context. His observations on the apparent contradiction between the doctrine of Paul and of James, are admirable. So also is his thoughtful estimate of the position sustained by the Apostle of the Gentiles in relation to the law. Much of his argument is directed against the notion, revived in our time, that we have, in the precedent of Paul, authority for setting aside all the Old-Testament Scriptures. The book is no mere sterile tract of frigid and technical criticism. The author writes as one who can feel as well as think. He sometimes kindles with his subject into a

warmth which is to his praise as a man, however inconsistent with the fancied dignity of that critical erudition whose coldness seems never to have felt, or whose pride is ashamed to express, the emotions of a devout heart. The discussion of thorny and perplexing vocables is relieved by elucidations, scenery, and facts drawn from the contributions of history and travel. On the whole, there is an equableness and fair proportion in the constituent elements of his commentary, which we could wish were oftener exhibited in works of the kind.

We had marked passages for extraction, but our space forbids us to allow to Dr. Baumgarten the opportunity we would otherwise gladly concede, of speaking for himself. His book is worthy of translation, or rather of something better. It should be re-written in English, if anything be done with it in our tongue at all. German works, translated literally, are generally repulsive to English readers. The number of those who read German is daily increasing. Unless a German writer be re-cast, and made to deliver himself, as far as possible, as he would have done had he been an Englishman, he had better be left to utter his native gutturals in private audience with the Teutonic student. A translation which fails to cast off the cumbrous complexity of the German sentence, is unjust alike to either language:—those who know German do not want it, and those who do not will not like it. If we are adequately to convey the thoughts of one nation to the other, it must be, with few exceptions, through the medium of reproduction, or, as the Germans call it, *Bearbeitung*, rather than translation. We take our leave of Dr. Baumgarten, with cordial thanks for a most conscientious and valuable contribution to our theological literature.

On 'Balder.'

Let not the reader, misled by similarity of sound, imagine that the Balder who gives name to this poem has anything to do with that Baldur of Scandinavian mythology—the Osiris of the north

—the benign deity who died, and whom all powers, men and things, save envious, wicked Loke, united to weep back to life. Still less should it be supposed that the hero of this drama is an impersonation of the author of it, or even his ideal of what the true poet, hero, or 'king of men,' ought to be. Balder is a tragic representation of genius without faith.

Poetry teaches indirectly; its moral should not fringe but interfuse it. In our day there is an unhealthy admiration of mere power, a morbid craving for intellectual gifts, as though they were the highest. In such pursuit, or for such possessors, all would seem permissible; and the old landmark, parting *fas* and *nefas*, is, for them, taken out of the way. A much applauded fallacy tells ambition that it has only to be true to itself (as though there were only an I—the favourite *ego*—and no *thou*, in the universe), that its work is worship, and, in its most selfish energy of persistence, emphatically a divine service. Now, we have had, and we have, not a few men of power amongst us whose practical labours, whose logic, whose eloquence, all have tended, by words written or deeds done, to refute this perilous error. Their gifts have been of the kind so much in demand—the conspicuous, coveted intellectual endowment, about which men burn such clouds of incense. But they say to all—whatever we possess, we lay at the feet of the Giver; our homage cannot be too lowly; we account this no shame —that to do otherwise would be the shame—and none darker; and we see true greatness rather in tone than power, and in self-sacrifice more than in self-assertion. No one can suspect, in their case, the cry of sour grapes. But in the poetic province such lesson is especially needed, so strong is the temptation to sacrifice every claim to that of art, and to subordinate the higher moral ambition to the lower æsthetic one. Yet didactic verses of intolerable mediocrity might issue, with the best intent, in floods of washy benignity, of course, utterly in vain. The lesson to be taught would make a grand theme for poetry, but only a crowned singer could hope to teach it. A man of inferior powers could not reach that height whereon the

danger is most imminent, and whence alone the fire-beacon to be kindled would be widely visible. Let some large and wealthy mind study the darker possibilities of his own being—then the question may be meetly handled. Some such denizen of Parnassus—understanding by experience the peculiar temptations of high poetic temperament—knowing well all those airy illusive tongues that 'syllable men's names' in the haunted wilderness of aspiration—looking steadily down that wrong turning, the gloomy avenue of that *via mala* he himself *might* have chosen—such an one could address his brethren, and all of us, with happiest effect. Qualifications adequate to an enterprise so worthy, Mr. Yendys unquestionably possesses; to some such purpose he appears to have devoted himself in the present poem, and, in our judgment, with signal success, where comparative failure could have been no disgrace.

The personages of the drama are few in number, for the story is not of stirring life among the throng of men, but of genius vanquished by misery where it sinned,—in the little world of home. Balder, the poet, Amy, his wife, and a doctor and an artist, friends of his, are the only characters. We listen to the aspirations of Balder, not after vulgar fame, but for an almost god-like power. Vast are his dreams of the royal munificence wherewith he will bless his fellows, subtile his Faust-like questing speculation, and passionate his fealty to Beauty; but with all we are permitted to see, working through, a pride that almost disdains to be of common clay with other men—would have all nature move for the behoof of one, and demands Olympian immunity from hindrance till, with universal shoutings, the top-stone of his surpassing work shall crown mankind and him. With the burning utterance of this colossal but distempered nature alternates the plaint of the nightingale singing 'with her breast against the thorn'—the lament of Amy, mourning the lost love that has waned before ambition, and weary of life already, after such a loss. This interchange is a great beauty; some of her songs to her child breathe an exquisite pathos;

and with their mournful repetitions, the faltering sweetness of their rhythm, and their sad, musical cadences, remind us of some of the best of our old English songs, while altogether free from any antique mannerism. On the lips of Amy, the very blank verse seems to change its nature; and the same measure which, but a page before, rolls in thunder, ebbs silverly away, and dies off in a faint lapsing melody. The author has grown in his mastery over blank verse, giving it extraordinary compass of rhythm, lyrical and dramatic; and, in force and intense compression, has improved in the latter part of this poem on the beginning, where a luxuriance sometimes riots, which the stern earnestness of the catastrophe has properly forbidden.

They lose their child, and sorrow unsettles Amy's reason, while it brings out yet farther the character of Balder. He had wanted another experience for his artistic consummation: he has it. He has not even faith enough to be confident of his child's happiness, and the mind which was to outreach the stars, grovels sullenly in the 'wormy circumstance' of the grave.

Throughout the body of the work, short poems and parts of poems by Balder are interspersed. There are among them pieces abounding in fresh and beautiful thought on those old themes, the Seasons, Morn, Noon, Night, and Chamouni. A kind of glee is sung, in one place, called the 'Song of the Sun,' from which we select (not without hesitation among so many) the only extract our space will allow us to give:—

'I am the sun; I am above the mountains;
My joy is on me; I will give you day!
I will spend day among you like a king!
Your water shall be wine, because I reign!
I stave my golden vintage on the mountains;
And all your rushing rivers run with day!
I am the sun—I am above the mountains!
Arise, my hand is open—it is day!
Rise! as men strike a bell, and make it music,
So have I struck the earth, and made it day!

Move, move, O world, on all your brazen hinges;
Send round the thunder of your golden wheels;
Throng out, O millions, out—O shouting millions;
Throng out, O millions, shouting, shouting day!
For as one blows a trumpet through the valleys,
So from my golden trumpet I blow day!'

The art which depicts the darkening course of Balder's mind, down towards the crime with which this first part concludes, exhibits a dramatic insight which even the promise of 'The Roman' had not led us to anticipate. The brief remark of Balder, when her pain and her insanity return on Amy after a brief sunny interval,—

'The sun shines—
This flower is the same colour, the bird sings,
The clouds, the plain, the mountains, are not changed,'—

is admirable in this way, almost in itself a key to her character. An inferior workman would have inserted here much raving volubility. So we have again perfect truth to nature where Balder, in the very midst of his mental agony, watches for hours the birds bringing food to the nest. Similarly, where he reasons down conscience under the name of conventionalism; reconciles himself to sin as a holy necessity; draws from his misery, to which the heavens are dumb, sanctions for defiant transgression. The heavy trial which crushes him could only have been borne by the very love which has been withered; and wrong leads to wrong, finding, after the first distortion, inducements or palliatives on every side, even in that very quarter which should have made him pause.

The songs and poems inserted in the course of the action (among which the ballad in the twenty-eighth scene, the veiled scroll to Amy, and the vast apocalyptic impersonations of War and Tyranny, are especially remarkable), so far from really marring its progress, or overloading the fabric of the work, like ill-joined *purpurei panni*, are all, in fact, subservient to the main end. It has been truly said, that no man can draw a character beyond the range of his own. A

writer may tell us that one of his personages was very profound or very witty, but unless he himself has the depth or the art he attributes to his creation, he cannot make him speak or act, and all his description will not vitalize the mute abstraction. Our author, by showing us Balder at work, and imparting to us scraps from his poetical portfolio, not merely tells us he had great powers, and talks of what he desired or might accomplish, but shows us what he actually does; and by specimens of his workmanship gives life and reality to the character as a whole; while, at the same time, these very samples, by their peculiar character, are rendered, most of them, indicative of the ultimate issue.

In bidding us await a farther development, possibly some restoration of the same character, in a second part, Mr. Yendys has committed himself to a task yet more arduous than that which he has already so ably accomplished. There is always some disadvantage in such division where, as in this case, there is an essential unity of plan. The design of the first part will be misconceived by those who forget that it is *only* the first, and take the close of an act as the catastrophe of the piece. Mr. Yendys is very seldom obscure, is too wise to veil his meaning under allegorical conceits, or to lodge a purpose too deep for the discovery of those who read with ordinary attention; but it will be important for him to remember how large is that class of readers upon whom a design must be almost intruded if it is to be seen at all. The more guides or finger-posts he can introduce for such readers (though contrivances so prosaic may be little to his own taste), the wider will be the diffusion of the pleasure and the profit he has it in his power to communicate. We would speed him on his way with our best wishes, feeling that he has already won for himself every augury of success.

Poems. By Matthew Arnold.

Not a little of our modern poetry has trusted for success to luxuriance of fancy, to a multitude of individual beauties of thought and expression, rather than to grandeur of action or unity of purpose in the work taken as a whole. The principle of Mr. Arnold's poetry is a reaction against excess in this direction. He would have us retrace our steps towards the severer simplicity of Sophocles. Poems like those before us, and the 'Festus' of Mr. Bailey, stand at opposite extremes. The admirers of the former will be tempted to account Bailey's work a gorgeous incoherence—a mass of materials for poetry rather than a poem; while those who are enthusiastic for 'Festus' will complain of tameness in Mr. Arnold, will object that the statuesque repose he covets is a conventionalism; that nature is complex, even grotesque, in her startling varieties of affluence—certainly not limited, like the Greek ideal. For our own part, we are catholic enough heartily to enjoy both. Mr. Arnold's preface does not convince us that he is right; but we like his poetry for all that. His poems abound in genuine felicities of expression, always rigorously subordinated to the dominant impression in view. 'Sohrab and Rustum' is an epic 'adventure' which may worthily take rank not far beneath Tennyson's 'Morte d'Arthur.' 'Tristam and Iseult' is unequal and faulty, according to the author's own canon, but redeemed by some descriptive passages of great excellence. The occasional pieces and the sonnets we think inferior. It is generally the cast of a writer's own temperament and culture that determines his theory, and Mr. Arnold is altogether objective. He succeeds best where he has to deal with action; and, with all his admiration for the Greek drama, is least happy when lyrical, most so when following Homer. The best passages in the 'Strayed Reveller' are those which possess the same beauty for which the 'Forsaken Merman' is so remarkable—the power the poet has of identifying himself, and making us identify ourselves, with a certain phase or province of the external world. Whatever view he may take of the old quarrel

between classicist and romanticist, the reader of taste will find in this little volume of Mr. Arnold's very much that will give him pleasure.

'*Aurora Leigh*.'

THIS is a poem in nine books—some four hundred pages of blank verse, and yet not such that any reasonable person would wish it shorter. It tells a story of these nineteenth century days, with incidents and characters that might have furnished forth an ordinary three-volume novel. But Mrs. Browning, being a poetess, has thrown the materials of a tale which embodies the result of much reflection on some of the most anxious questions of our time, into the form most congenial to her nature. In her blank verse she has endeavoured to approach as nearly to the language of daily life as was possible without becoming prosaic or colloquial. The rhythm is free and varied, without any reflection of that classic stateliness so appropriate to the lofty theme of Milton. The conception of the poem as a whole is original, because natural—for originality is but nature—a genuine spontaneity. Living with broad and genial sympathies in these times, Mrs. Browning desires to speak of them and to them in her own chosen language. Hence the apparent incongruity of a modern novel in the form of an epic poem.

Goethe has represented in his *Tasso* the conflict between those antipathetic natures—the shrewd and polished diplomatist, the simple-minded and impulsive poet. In *Antonio* and in *Tasso* the real and the ideal are brought together in necessary hostility, while each is unable to apprehend the other. *Aurora Leigh* represents, in a province of its own, another form of that old hereditary feud between the imaginative mind and the practical, between the genius which creates in art and the talent which combines in administration. The antithesis of the poem is not so much that which exists between a worldly-wise conventionalism and the idealism of a poet; it depicts rather the inevitable divergence between the intellectual theorist who desires to elevate men by a superior external organization, and

the artist who believes that the best expression of his own truest culture will constitute his most serviceable contribution to the sum of general well-being. The difference here is not irreconcileable, and the poem does not close without indicating the ultimate harmony in which these rival forms of beneficence, or types of duty, may be combined.

Aurora has a cousin, Romney Leigh, who devotes life and fortune to schemes for social improvement. She, on the other hand, feels within her the stirring of the poetic gift. He sees only a vast sum of human misery, against which he is commissioned to fight. He looks down, discerning worms and corruption everywhere. She looks upward, and sees the sun and feels the summer time, and makes song and praise her service. But Aurora, too, is not free from an excess on her side. She is bent on attaining a position of her own above that commonly assigned to woman. She will be no mere subordinate help-meet in the work of any man, but achieve a task of her own, not inferior. His theories break to pieces when put in practice. She reaches the height of her ambition to find it barrenness, for she is not in her place; woman's happiness is not hers, and the heart's void is not filled. Then, at last, the two begin better to understand each other, and better to comprehend what is possible and what is duty for themselves. In their union that just medium is indicated which abstains, in the conduct of life, from excess of generalization on the one side, and excessive individualism on the other. The impatience which would attempt too much, and is for reforming all wrong at a stroke, receives its due lesson.

Aurora refuses to join Romney Leigh in his schemes of Christian socialism. He rates lightly the art to which she turns—above all, that art as handled by a woman, incapable by nature of generalization. Women, he says, care nothing for the vast sum of misery, only for the individual sorrows visible within their home circle, or not beyond its reach. He says—

> 'Show me a tear
> Wet as Cordelia's, in eyes bright as yours,

Because the world is mad! You cannot count
That you should weep for this account, not you!
You weep for what you know. A red-haired child,
Sick in a fever, if you touch him once,
Though but so little as with a finger tip,
Will set you weeping; but a million sick—
You could as soon weep for the rule of three,
Or compound fractions. Therefore this same world,
Uncomprehended by you, must remain
Uninfluenced by you. Women as you are,
Mere women, personal and passionate,
You give us doating mothers and chaste wives,
Sublime Madonnas, and enduring saints,
We get no Christ from you; and verily,
We shall not get a poet, in my mind.'

In reply, Aurora, while she reverences duly the freedom of this generous theorist from personal aims, replies that his work is not the kind for her—he is married already to his social experiment—she too has a vocation. Men are greater than any of their prosperities. The evil lies deeper than he thinks. The artist is still needed to keep up the open roads between the seen and unseen.

'A starved man
Exceeds a fat beast: we'll not barter, sir,
The beautiful for barley. And, even so,
I hold you will not compass your poor ends
Of barley-feeding and material ease,
Without a poet's individualism
To work your universal. It takes a soul
To move a body; it takes a high-soul'd man
To move the masses—even to a cleaner stye.
It takes the ideal to blow a hair's breadth off
The dust of the actual. Ah, your Fouriers failed,
Because not poets enough to understand
That life develops from within.'

So Romney Leigh acknowledges at last, and learns patience, and ceases toiling to carve the world anew after a 'pattern on his nail,' and vexing his soul to abolish inequalities, and somehow serve out

to every man perfect virtue, and all sorts of comforts, 'gratuitously, with the soup at six.' He says in the end—

> 'Oh, cousin, let us be content, in work,
> To do the thing we can, and not presume
> To fret because it's little. 'Twill employ
> Seven men, they say, to make a perfect pin:
> Who makes the head, content to miss the point;
> Who makes the point, agreed to leave the join;
> And if a man should cry, 'I want a pin,
> And I must make it straightway, head and point,'
> His wisdom is not worth the pin he wants.
> Seven men to a pin—and not a man too much!
> Seven generations, haply, to this world,
> To right it visibly, a finger's breadth,
> And mend its rents a little.' •

This is sound philosophy—and the poem has many such wise and large-minded thoughts, vigorously expressed in felicitous and glowing language. Our generation scarcely numbers more than one or two among its master-minds from whom we could have looked for a production at all to rival this in comprehensiveness—a poem with so much genuine depth, and so free from obscurity. The results of abstract thinking are here, and yet there is no heavy philosophising of set purpose. A warm human life meets us everywhere. There are no broad levels of prosaic reflection, such as sometimes test the patience even of true Wordsworthians. Men and women are introduced who learn philosophy by actual life, instead of those fair but hazy phantoms which allure and disappoint us in many of the philosophical poems of Schiller. Very difficult is the task undertaken. To have succeeded so well is high praise. Some years ago the same writer would certainly have failed in great measure.

The poem contains many descriptive passages of great power or beauty, such for example as the sketches of English rural scenery as compared with the Italian—sunset in London—the scene in the church on the day of Romney's wedding—the fall of Leigh Hall, and others. The love of Marian for her child is rendered with a

force and pathos that will come home to many mothers' hearts. The flight of a girl whose depraved mother would have sold her to the squire, is thus vigorously painted—

> 'The child turned round,
> And looked up piteous in the mother's face,
> (Be sure that mother's deathbed will not want
> Another devil to damn, than such a look.)
> 'Oh, mother!' then, with desperate glance to heaven,
> 'God, free me from my mother!' she shrieked out,
> 'These mothers are too dreadful.' And, with force
> As passionate as fear, she tore her hands
> Like lilies from the rocks, from hers and his,
> And sprang down, bounded headlong down the steep,
> Away from both—away, if possible,
> As far as God—away! They yelled at her,
> As famished hounds at a hare. She heard them yell.
> She felt her name hiss after her from the hills,
> Like shot from guns. On, on. And now she had cast
> The voices off with the uplands. On. Mad fear
> Was running in her feet and killing the ground;
> The white roads curled as if she burnt them up,
> The green fields melted, wayside trees fell back
> To make room for her. Then, her head grew vexed—
> Trees, fields, turned on her, and ran after her;
> She heard the quick pants of the hills behind,
> Their keen air pricked her neck. She had lost her feet,
> Could run no more, yet, somehow, went as fast—
> The horizon, red 'twixt steeples in the east,
> So sucked her forward, forward, while her heart
> Kept swelling, swelling, till it swelled so big
> It seemed to fill her body; then it burst,
> And overflowed the world, and swamped the light.
> 'And now I am dead and safe,' thought Marian Erle—
> She had dropped—she had fainted.'

If the plot of this tale had been developed in a prose fiction, some objections might have been urged on the score of probability. But we are not sure that the demand should be pressed so rigorously on a poem. The speeches uttered in the dialogues are sometimes so

long as to lose almost wholly the conversational character, and yet it cannot be denied that they are in spirit dramatic, inasmuch as each is made to arise out of what had gone before, and is such as belongs to the character who gives it utterance. The story of many poems is simply a slender thread on which to hang imagery, descriptions, and reflection, and is encumbered out of all measure by its adornments. In this instance the story itself (as in the poems of Scott) assumes a prominent interest, and while all mere ornament is subordinated, is told clearly and well, yet so imaginatively that the reader can never think to himself—'All this would have been better said in prose.'

'*Craigcrook Castle.*'

MR. MASSEY'S first volume of poems was received with general favour by the critics; and this, his second, gives abundant evidence that their auguries were not fallacious as regards the reality of his genius, nor their praise in any way injurious to its culture. We shall proceed to give an account of this little book, believing some information as to its contents more likely than a few sentences of general criticism to induce our readers to make acquaintance with it for themselves. First of all, there is a description of Craigcrook Castle, with 'its tiny town of towers,' its famous roses, and the region round about. To these roses, by the way, certain stanzas are addressed farther on, whose only fault is one which it would be scarcely fair to lay at Mr. Massey's door. Lovely are the roses: graceful are the verses; but what art could make 'Craigcrook' sound pleasantly in song? The recurrence of that word in every stanza is as the grating of a coffee-mill amidst sweet harping. There are some vigorous passages in the description of the guests at the Castle, their employments, and how they agree to sing or say, in turn, each somewhat that shall crown the glorious summer-day they celebrate.

The first poem, entitled 'The Mother's Idol broken,' consists of occasional pieces suggested by the death of a child. Very touching

are some of these ejaculations and laments—these yearning, wistful cries after the lost little one—these echoes of the dear child-life, now silent in the grave. Many thoughts and lines here are divining-rods that find out the hidden spring of tears, and make us look heavenward, whither some precious one hath gone before. The following passages, for example, are so beautiful, because so true—no poetic expression or vesture, merely—but drawn from the depths of our common humanity.

'This is a curl of our poor 'Splendid's' hair!
A sunny burst of rare and ripe young gold—
A ring of sinless gold that weds two worlds!'

Again:—

'There is her nest where in beauty smiled
Our babe, as we leaned above;
And her pleading face asked for the tenderest place
In all our world of love.
Very silent and empty now! yet we feel
It rock; and a tiny footfall
Comes over the floor in the thrilling night-hush,
And our hearts leap up for the call
Of our puir wee lammie dead and gone;
Our bonnie wee lammie dead and gone.'

We have not space for more quotation from this part of the book, but we are much mistaken if there are not many who will prefer it to all the rest. We have seen those who seldom read a line of poetry, and to whom 'Balder' seemed a prophecy in a tongue uninterpreted, who were melted by the pathos of Mr. Dobell's 'England in Time of War.' So while the lovers of poetry and the students of art rejoice in the 'Bridegroom of Beauty,' or such a poem as 'Only a Dream,' the mother will turn to the plaintive utterances of bereavement, and feel that her grief has found words. And what truer test or higher tribute could either poet seek or find? For what is Poetry but Truth with her singing-robes about her?

Next follows 'Lady Laura,' a tale in short cantos of various measure, wherein the lady, cast out by falsehood from her broad

lands, weds the poor man whom in her prosperity she had lifted out of the dust. His hidden love is thus described:—

'He saw her in the spring-dawns gliding down,
Like Morning on the world, to tend the flowers
That from her touch sprang thrilling with delight.
Darkened into himself, he watcht, all eye,
Like spirit that sees its mortal love go by,
Itself invisible.'

Has the reader marked the horse-chestnut in blossom on a night in spring?—

'Ah, happy nights and lustrous darks, in which
He watcht her casement when the house was mute,
Where the tall chestnuts husht her beauty round,
Uplifting in their hands a light of flowers!'

The latter of the two following is a lovely line—

'In honeyed light, and sweet with pleasant showers,
Lies all the land, *a coloured flame of flowers.*'

Those who have seen our great manufactories at night will recognise in the following thought something more than a mere fancy—

'And not forgotten was that factory world,
Which like a doomed ship far away i' the night
Pleaded—each port-hole lighted up for help!'

Among the 'Glimpses of the War,' which follow, we most admire the description of Inkermann, where the impetuous fiery lines echo the shock of conflict, and sorrow for those

'Who fell in Boyhood's comely bloom, and Bravery's lusty pride;
'But they made their bed o' the Russian dead, ere they lay down and died.'

'The Bridegroom of Beauty' is a blank-verse poem, in which is portrayed the enamoured pursuit of artist or of poet after the changeful, multiform Spirit of Beauty. Surely the wooer hath caught a glimpse of his spirit-mistress when he calls flowers

'The coloured clouds that kindle and richly rise
From out the bosom of Earth's emerald sea:—'

or when he speaks of the

'—— vernal nights so tender, calm, and cool,
When eerie Darkness lays its shadowy hands
On Earth, and reads her sins with myriad eyes,
Like a Confessor o'er a kneeling Nun.'

'Crumbs from the Table' follow next, sundry songs and ballads, whereof the best to our mind is that entitled 'Long Ago.' 'A Ballad of the Old Time' is successful in catching the mediæval spirit, save in such a line as 'Hush the hills in a mystic dream,' which lacks the due simplicity. 'In the dead Unhappy Midnight,' though spirited in expression, does not tell its own story with sufficient distinctness. It is like a shadowy, echoing corridor, suggestive of some tale of horror, but only suggestive; for the old crone or the decrepit steward, who ought to relate it, is not at our side. The last poem, called 'Only a Dream,' is conspicuous for power and passion, and is distinguished, moreover, by a praiseworthy unity and completeness. But we do not like such a line as this—

'Warm-wingéd Ardours plumed her parted lips.'

Shelley is fond of this mythology of abstractions, and personifies and wings 'ardours,' and 'visions,' and 'thoughts;' but his genius is no true guiding-star in this matter. When Mr. Massey says—

'White waves of sea-like soul had climbed, and dasht
The red light from its heaven of her cheek,'

we feel that he expresses himself in a quaint conceit—an ingenious allegory, almost—rather than in that rapid and bold, yet congruous metaphor, which is the true language of passion. Shakspeare makes Romeo say of the dead Juliet,

'—— beauty's ensign yet
Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks,
And death's pale flag is not advanced there.'

A passage in which a different conceit, but still a conceit, and not a genuine imaginative figure, is employed to depict a similar object.

Shakspeare's conceit may be better than Mr. Massey's (there is not much to choose), but both are forced and fanciful, both play with the subject. Or, if we defend Shakspeare here just because he is Shakspeare, how shall we justify that metaphor from the lawyer's office, a few lines lower down,

> '—— and lips, O you,
> The doors of death, seal with a righteous kiss
> A dateless bargain to engrossing death.'

Romeo and Juliet was one of Shakspeare's youthful plays, but assuredly were one of our young poets now to perpetrate a metaphor so unnatural, a score of critical tomahawks would be straightway buried in his heart, and it would be long before he heard the last of small jokes about parchment and attorneys' clerks.

We bid farewell to Mr. Massey for the present, with hearty good wishes for the farther ripening of gifts which have already afforded us so much pleasure.

Young's 'Pre-Raffaelitism.'

THIS is a clever book, attacking with considerable force that new school of art to which Mr. Ruskin has lent, of late, his powerful advocacy. The fight is a fair one. Mr. Young does not rail at his antagonist. By an admission as cordial, perhaps, as could be expected from an adversary, of Mr. Ruskin's great abilities, Mr. Young shakes hands before the contest. The exposure of the contradictions to be found in the eloquent pages of the Oxford Graduate is acute and unsparing. In fact, Mr. Ruskin is essentially a poet—an intense, impressionable nature. Those keen susceptibilities and that subtilty of thought which render his appreciation of art and of nature so admirable, are qualities which render him especially liable to change. Like all strong men, his strength is in some respects his weakness. Bravely and beautifully has he spoken out his thoughts, and made an epoch in the criticism of art. Of the spirit of his endeavour it is impossible to speak too highly. It has been (amidst all inconsistencies) his constant aim to win ac-

knowledgment for the highest functions of art, to hallow it with the sense of consecration, to vindicate its divineness. In some of his examples we think him unfortunate; in some of his generalizations, too hasty and indiscriminate. Associating as he does all art with some moral purpose, a false style is to him a child of the devil—the true, a child of God. All his canons of taste are articles of faith. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the connoisseur in the mantle of the prophet should utter many a hard saying, and pronounce many a vehement denunciation. The enmity he has thus incurred is natural enough. He cannot suppose himself a martyr. Other men beside him have also made art a matter of conscience, and differ from him in their conclusions.

The words of Bacon, which Mr. Young has chosen for his motto, indicate very plainly his position:—'The world being inferior to the soul; by reason whereof there is agreeable to the spirit of man a more ample greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety than can be found in the nature of things.' Such is the ground occupied alike by the lovers of Plato and the lovers of Bacon; in fact, by every idealist, as opposed to the Pre-Raffaelite and other theories, which say that art is merely imitative, and consists simply in a transcript, Chinese or photographic in its fidelity, of nature as we find it. It is Aristotle who says that poetry is an imitative art. But the great dramatists of Greece are poets according to Bacon's definition, not according to Aristotle's. They create, and do not imitate. What could be more unlike the daily life of the Athenian than the figures and the scenes of his tragic stage—those measured processional movements of the chorus about the Thymele—that centre-piece of every scene—the iambics, the cothurnus, the masks, the music, the story itself, with its colossal Fate, working woe to demi-gods and kings? What more unlike actual life than the classic Unities? If the truth by which poetry is to be tested mean truth to the real life of to-day, what truth have the infernal and celestial scenes of Milton and of Dante, and where is the truth of

the *Faery Queene?* Mr. Ruskin quotes Carlyle, who says that Poetry is nothing more than 'higher knowledge;' and that, for grown persons, 'the only genuine Romance is Reality.' But Mr. Carlyle is an idealist, if ever there was one. In his philosophy it is our flesh and blood which is the apparition—the phantom; and reality can only be predicated of that Mind (divine and human) of which matter is the product, outcome, or manifestation. When, therefore, Carlyle speaks of reality, he never means the mere actual, but that actual as it is seen by the light of that higher truth and knowledge which are in the seeing mind. Thus Wordsworth's boor, to whom the primrose was but 'a yellow primrose,' and nothing more, did not see the reality, only the outside of the thing. Wordsworth, seeing beneath appearance—communicating, as it were, of his own soul to the flower, sees it truly—has the higher, because the inner, knowledge of it. When, therefore, Pre-Raffaelitism says that there should be no fantastic distortion or indolent neglect of the actual forms of nature—when it demands study, accuracy, and a thorough doing of all we do, it says what is right and true, but not altogether novel. But when (as a recent writer has remarked) it forgets that the eye is not a perfect organ, and must see many things obscurely, and lose many minutiæ, it is untrue to actual nature. If our eyes were magnifying-glasses, then it would be right to paint pictures which required a microscope. When Pre-Raffaelitism demands that the mind shall never colour with its own hues the forms of matter—that we ought to choose ungraceful or ugly forms in preference to beautiful ones, when the choice is equally open, because they are more common—when it denies that the soul is greater than the world, and may combine therefrom, or create for its solace and delectation—then is it poverty-stricken, prosaic, materialistic, and debasing. A man who says, I will not select a face brutalized by debauchery, and rubicund with grog-blossoms, as a subject for my pencil, is surely not to be rebuked as a presumptuous mortal, wanting to improve God's handiwork, and too conceited to take nature as she is. The artist so rebuked might

justly reply—God's work I will paint as faithfully as I can; but that nose, like half-a-dozen double strawberries, is not God's handiwork, but the devil's. And the same is true of lesser degrees of distortion. The sighing after an ideal—a belief that the creation travails towards some far-off deliverance—a longing for 'the light that never was on land or sea,' are the inalienable heritage of man. In fact, on the true principles of Pre-Raffaelitism, it is difficult to see what justification can be found for what Mr. Ruskin calls 'imagination penetrative,' and distinguishes as so essential to the highest poetry. That exercise of imagination must be rejected as 'a throwing of man's shadow on God's work.' Yet Wordsworth abounds in such impersonations or idealizations of natural objects, informing them with his own feelings, and making them speak his language. And in spite of his theory, he has given us an idealized, and not the actual country life of Westmoreland; and in verse, moreover, which rustics do *not* talk. If mere imitation stands so high, Mr. Ruskin should not regard the grainer's work as the pitiable, soul-deadening process he describes it. But he speaks at some times as slightingly, as at others highly, of laborious imitative finish. In the *Modern Painters* Mr. Ruskin has allowed Imagination a certain prerogative of selection and discretion which he would now seem to deny it.

We must refer the reader to Mr. Young's book for a fair reply to one of Mr. Ruskin's most fallacious dicta—that the characteristic of modern civilization is the denial of Christ. He confounds religion itself with the mere artistic manifestation of it. It is somewhat amusing to see Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Ruskin attributing a deep religiousness to your Abbot Samson, and others, because they never talked about religion, and declaring the reticence of our generation a proof that we have scarcely any religion at all. It must never be forgotten that religious art may become an easy substitute for religious life, and that it is much easier for a man to put his religion into a window than into his conduct. Heartily as we admire the true nobleness of the Middle Age, we do not sigh, as

Mr. Ruskin would seem to do, for the times when religion, in the hands of the magistrate, lent her sanction to every form of oppression, and the 'simple faith' of our forefathers was held in awe by the executioner.

Ruskin's 'Notes on the Turner Gallery.'

THERE are those who think that Mr. Ruskin, having succeeded in bringing great numbers to an admiration of the once-neglected Turner, is now himself shifting his ground, and depreciating the idol he has set up. These 'Notes' certainly contain a large amount of censure mingled with praise, but not enough, we think, to justify such a suspicion. A certain class of large ideal landscapes were criticised unfavourably by Mr. Ruskin, even in the first volume of the *Modern Painters*. He reminds us of this fact, and repeats his objections. It is well to bear in mind that his worship is not without discrimination. Some of those pictures which most puzzled and provoked the public by their frantic incoherence and obscurity, were painted, he acknowledges, in the decline of Turner's genius. Such a painting as 'Undine Giving the Ring,' Mr. Ruskin places in the same relation to Turner's other works with that occupied by *Count Robert of Paris* and *Castle Dangerous* to the earlier novels of Scott. At the same time, the Pre-Raffaelite tendency has, we think, grown upon him so far as to place him in antagonism to certain true and noble sayings in his own early works. He cannot occupy the extreme of the Pre-Raffaelite position without falling into manifold self-contradiction. In these very 'Notes' he does not consistently maintain the position that art is purely descriptive, not didactic. Finding fault with the 'Decline of the Carthaginian Empire,' he blames Turner for working in this picture only for show, and painfully 'striving to set forth something that was not in his heart, and could never get there.' Here the admission is made that an artist ought to set forth in a picture, or that he may,—what is in his heart. But it is of the very essence of Pre-Raf-

faelitism (if its professed discovery be more than a truism) to deny this, and to say, the painter has no business to put into his picture what he *thinks*, but only what he *sees*. He is to receive and accurately to represent the forms and hues of nature—that is all. If Pre-Raffaelitism simply censured (as Mr. Ruskin justly does) the conventional idealism of such mountains as Turner painted overlooking the Garden of the Hesperides, no reasonable opposition could be made. But the real dispute turns about such questions as these:—Is there no medium possible between a conventional idealism which distorts nature, and bare, daguerreotype matter-of-fact? Is the common-place to be enthroned because we have dethroned the fantastical? Has art only to tell men what it sees, but in no way what the artist feels concerning what he sees? Can the imagination banish at pleasure some discordant elements which are found occasionally to mar the harmony of a natural scene? There was a time when Mr. Ruskin would have allowed that faculty such a privilege. It may be questioned whether Turner's ideal dragon, which Mr. Ruskin praises so highly as an imaginative apprehension of possible truth, be not totally inadmissible on Pre-Raffaelite principles. What business had Turner with idealizing—fancying what dragons *might* be?—his sole business was with material fact. The principles of Pre-Raffaelitism applied to literature, condemn utterly such a fanciful interpretation as Mr. Ruskin very ingeniously thrusts upon the picture of 'Ulysses deriding Polyphemus.' His business was with the picture, and not with such fine-drawn analogies and allegorical conceits about it as the following:—

TURNER AND ULYSSES.

'He (Turner) had been himself shut-up by one-eyed people, in a cave 'darkened with laurels' (getting no good, but only evil, from all the fame of the great of long ago)—he had seen his companions eaten in the cave by the one-eyed people—(many a painter of good promise had fallen by Turner's side in those early toils of his); at last, when his own time had like to have come, he thrust the rugged pine-trunk—all ablaze (rough nature, and the light of it)—into the faces of the one-eyed people, left them tearing their hair as the cloud-

banks—got out of the cave in an humble way, under a sheep's belly—(helped by the lowliness and gentleness of nature, as well as by her ruggedness and flame)—and got away to open sea as the dawn broke over the Enchanted Island.'—p. 45.

The cast of mind which rejoices in subtle fancies such as these can never be really at home in a theory of bald and superficial literalism—cannot stop short at the outward and the material—must ever, in spite of itself, seek beneath the sign the thing signified.

In these 'Notes,' Mr. Ruskin refers the works of Turner to four periods. During the first (1800—1820) he laboured as the imitator, though never as the mere copyist, of the masters he most admired. In the second period (1820—1835) he produced compositions or ideal pieces, working on the principles which he had discovered during his studentship. The third period (1835—1845)—the decennium of his greatness—was devoted to the reproduction, as far as possible, of the simple impressions he received from nature, 'associating them with his own deepest feelings.' Is not this last clause treasonable in the eyes of Pre-Raffaelitism? If not, the Pre-Raffaelite controversy (a few pedantries, archaisms, and affectations excepted) is, after all, a dispute about words, to our thinking.

Maurice's 'Mediæval Philosophy.'

THIS sketch of mediæval philosophy is a clever one, abundant in translated extracts, connected by passages of narrative, explanation, and reflection. In a modest preface, Mr. Maurice declines to claim for his work any merit beyond that of conveying a hint of what might be done, rather than actual accomplishment. Mr. Maurice cannot write, even hastily, and (in one sense) superficially, without dropping by the way some wise remarks, without stimulating thought, and imparting a living interest to subjects proverbially dry. But he does not consult his reputation by writing so much and so rapidly. He is sometimes apt, we think, to form his opinion

by one quick, intuitive glance, and then to view all the subsequent or collateral facts which present themselves in the light of that preconception. The confidence with which he tells us what the mediæval doctors were thinking, were trying to accomplish, and how they were sometimes unconsciously travelling in one road, when they thought themselves in another, is calculated to awaken suspicion. The desire to see all the true and good which is discernible in the perplexities and mistakes of bygone thinkers, is a right spirit and a praiseworthy—nay, more, essential to the understanding of their systems. But this important qualification is not to supersede the most patient and impartial inquiry. And we think that Mr. Maurice does sometimes suppose he has understood a man by the mere act of imagining himself in his place, and making him talk as he thinks he would have spoken himself in such circumstances. It is one thing to be able to put some of a man's thoughts into clear and forcible language, and another to have gone round about him, carefully estimated his whole position, and then to give us the complete result. Mr. Maurice repudiates, with honest indignation, the charge of juggling with words. We believe him to be perfectly sincere in such denial. We think too highly of his spirit and his motives to suppose him wittingly sophistical, whether from vanity or from hatred. But his mind is remarkable for a very peculiar kind of subtilty, which at first sight, or to an unfriendly critic, does look very like sophistry. He is disposed to presume, at the first glance, that the common acceptation of a word is more likely to be the wrong one than the right. To rescue us from the tyranny of a one-sided use of any particular term, he will invest it with a sense quite different—apparently opposed, perhaps. This procedure puzzles people; it throws an air of paradox and of uncertainty over what he says. The reader is not sure of the meaning the author attaches to words that look, on the page, plain and simple enough. It seems as though a mind so ingenious might, without any crookedness of purpose, make anything out of anything, and then feel itself injured by the popular

surprise. It is a part of his idiosyncrasy to see beneath the surface of facts and doctrines something very different from that which they appear to contain. Is a creed severe? Mr. Maurice will show you that in that seeming severity there lies the most expansive love, and that the most charitable can use most appropriately those awful words. Mr. Maurice will show how some champion of ecclesiastical domination was, in reality, the friend of liberty. He will exhibit to you in the theist, the man who has entangled himself unawares in pantheism; and in the religion of the seeming pantheist, a truer and a deeper theism. In one instance and in another, there is truth in such disclosures. But the constancy with which this paradoxical kind of interpretation is repeated, on almost every subject, brings conviction at last of an intellectual peculiarity, and makes us read his historic judgments with caution. We make allowance for the impatience, the over-refinement, or the caprice of an ingenious writer, whose abilities we acknowledge, whose large sympathies and elevated purpose we admire.

An example, in part, of what we mean will be found in what Mr. Maurice has here said concerning John Scotus Erigena. He breaks a lance with M. Guizot, who has selected Erigena, in his *Lectures on the History of Civilization in France*, as the representative of the philosophical, as opposed to the theological, tendency of his time. M. Guizot has certainly fallen into an anachronism, and antedated the influence of Neoplatonism. On this point the victory of Mr. Maurice over him is easy and decisive. Mr. Maurice is correct, also, in reminding us that the system of Dionysius Areopagita was formed from the theological rather than the philosophical branch of Neoplatonism,—belongs more to the high-priest Proclus, than to Plotinus the metaphysician. But this fact does not prevent the system of Dionysius from being, in spirit, more pantheistic and pagan than truly Christian. In spite of its Christian terminology and its ecclesiastical functionaries, its substance and heart consists in the idea of a necessary pantheistic process of emanation from, and of return into, the super-essential

One. Its view of sin is merely negative: evil is a defect, a coming-short; in other words, the system takes the pagan view of sin, as deficient being, and not the Christian view, which regards it as a self-asserting antagonism against the Divine Goodness. Now, the system of Erigena was founded on the writings of Dionysius. John Scotus is far more profound,—at once less hierarchical and more philosophic than the Greek; but the Neoplatonist principle is still there, and is by him developed yet farther. M. Guizot is right, then, in declaring his doctrines philosophical rather than theological —in the ecclesiastical sense. But Erigena did not stand in any *avowed* opposition to the church, and was probably himself unconscious how incompatible was his pantheistic theory with the Christian religion. He is *extra*-ecclesiastical rather than *anti*-ecclesiastical,—intrinsically, *without*, rather than consciously *against*, the Church.

In fact, there is one consideration of which both M. Guizot and Mr. Maurice seem for the moment to have lost sight, and on this ground we venture to interfere as a kind of umpire between two combatants, both of them in part right and in part wrong. The Neoplatonists were, in effect, baptized by the Middle Age. Only through them did the Middle Age know Plato. So imbued were some of the Fathers with Platonism, that subsequent times could not banish the Neoplatonists altogether from the Christian pale. Hence it came to pass that Erigena might be philosophic and pantheistic in his principle (as M. Guizot says he was); and yet believe himself, in spite of his Neoplatonism, a good churchman, as says Mr. Maurice. We rejoice, as much as Mr. Maurice himself, in the humility and the devotion of some passages he cites from Erigena. We have as much hope and charity for him, and, we believe, even more;—for we retain that hope in connexion with a more unfavourable view than Mr. Maurice seems inclined to take of the amount of mischievous error in his theory. Our explanation of his anomalous position is this. We believe that Erigena inherited Origen's idea, that the Gnosticus, or intellectual Christian, may receive philoso-

phical illumination from the Word, so as to attain a view of Christianity much deeper and broader than the popular one. Erigena conceived that the higher, esoteric theosophy was much nearer to Neoplatonism than to the common belief. On many important points, therefore, his philosophical Christianity sides unhesitatingly with the pagan theory, and not with the Christian. Thus he reduces creation to a necessary process within the depths of the Divine nature. The incarnation, as a revelation of the Divine character, is insignificant, almost Docetic, in his system; for he denies that the Son could ever reveal the Infinite Father in a finite form. For redemption he substitutes a reduction of all things to their primordial causes. His great object is to provide for escape, not from spiritual death to spiritual life, but from matter to the idea—from the fallen actual to the metaphysical (rather than the moral) archetype. In his theory, it was as necessary for his own sake as for ours, that the Word should manifest himself for a time on the earth. He would translate 'Christ came into the world to save sinners,' somewhat thus—'The Word—the repertory of ideal causes—found it necessary to enter among the effects of those causes, because those effects were drifting into distance from the causes, and so liable to perish; a result which would have been fatal to the causes themselves; for take away the effect, and what becomes of the cause? The Word prepared the way for the reduction of the universe to its primordial causes by assuming manhood, because man is the *microcosm*, and contains in himself the elements of the whole universe of things.' Curiously enough, in combination with a conception of sin, as mere defect, Erigena holds also a view of it so positive as to make it the cause of the distinction of sex. Such an incongruity could only occur in a time when celibacy and Platonism were extolled together.

We think that the extent of Erigena's heresy about a future state has been much exaggerated. His theory admits of the future punishment of the wicked by illusions of their own creating—to them, fearfully real. He has no less than eight degrees of ascent

for the blessed; five *to* God, and three *into* God. However wrong in opposing Christianity and philosophy to each other, M. Guizot is right in declaring the pagan conception to involve the reduction of all personality into the One; while the Christian religion maintains as emphatically, on the other side (in opposition to pantheism), that personality cannot be put off, and that individual retribution is sure. What Mr. Maurice says (p. 53) about mystical absorption is nothing to the purpose, and was only written, we think, in the heat of his contest with M. Guizot. For he must be aware that the final absorption or self-loss in God, however strong and almost pantheistic the language of some of the mystics about it, was always confined to the blessed. In conjunction with this doctrine, all the Roman Catholic mystics have held strongly the belief of the separate existence and punishment of the wicked. There is no likeness beyond that of sound between this *moral* self-annihilation in the vision of God, and that *cosmical process*, and necessary relapse of the manifold into the One, of which Neoplatonism speaks. Our space forbids us to give citations, or to go farther into these questions; but we think that if Mr. Maurice would again consult and reconsider his John Scotus, he will see reason to modify some of his expressions. His history of Mediæval Philosophy is, as a whole, well fitted for its purpose, and will give to many students that acquaintance with the scholastic cast of thought and expression which copious extracts and suggestive general remarks are best adapted to convey.

Macdonald's Poems.

Mr. Macdonald's new volume of poems possesses, in one sense, much variety; in another, little. The cast of thought is much the same throughout, grave and earnest; meditative even to melancholy, yet nowise morbid. The subjects chosen are mostly serious and elevated—religious, in the best sense, directly or indirectly. The exhilaration of animal spirits, intoxicated with life and Nature —the sport and revelry of Fancy, must be sought elsewhere. Such

buoyancy of soul is utterly inaccessible to certain states of health. Mr. Macdonald thinks and writes like a man who has looked death very closely in the face. He seems to walk constantly as on the borders of the spirit land. Much as he loves the woods and fields, they always talk to him of the tree of life, and the flowers which are everlasting. This world is the veil of the next, and the form of that other is partially discernible in its folds. He knows what it is to find the body a burden, and the flesh a cross. Perhaps, to the largest, richest order of poetry, a healthy body is as necessary as a gifted mind. Yet the invalid has some compensations. Let him give what he has. He sings sometimes for fellow-sufferers, sweetly and tenderly, touching chords which other hands cannot find. There are some beautiful passages, quite of this kind, in the narrative poem called 'A Hidden Life,' with which this volume opens; also, in several of the shorter pieces.

In the vehicle of expression, on the other hand, these poems evince remarkable variety. We read the blank verse poems, and we feel that blank verse suits the author best. There he has most room for his thoughts—and he seems to need the room. He is sometimes redundant. There are parts which would have been improved if some one or two, out of several thoughts (none of them without merit), had been selected, and the rest cancelled. The author must not forget the good old rule, 'to write with fury and correct with phlegm.' If, in these reviews for excision, some words, or phrases, or errant fancies be found exuberant in that place, yet too dear to be destroyed, they may be reserved. A book might be kept which, like a world of waiting, unborn souls, should contain the nascent ideas for which a fitting place would some day be found. But this by the way. As we travel toward the close of the book, we find this very writer succeeding in a style the most opposite. A succession of short pieces, in the four lined stanza, on 'The Gospel Women,' is remarkable for simplicity and compression. Another species of the poetic faculty is called for, and comes at the call.

These poems are in perfect taste; there is no misplaced embellishment, but nature, reverence, tenderness. The tale is told, the picture drawn, and the mind is left with some apt, suggestive thought, which briefly sums or points the whole.

But there is another style—the symbolical, or philosophic—in which the author appears to much less advantage. Even Coleridge, with all his melody, could not make that kind of poetry attractive. To impersonate and adorn abstraction is very easy, and for this reason to be shunned with suspicion. We are glad to see only one long piece of this description in the book; it is entitled, 'Death and Birth, a Symbol.' We found it obscure in thought, and deficient in Mr. Macdonald's usual vigour and expression. Nor is the meaning happily eked out by such marginal contrivances as the following:—'The Resentment of Genius at the Thumbscrews of worldly Talent;' 'The Devil Contempt whistling through the mouth of the Saint Renunciation.'

A fragment of a romantic tale, named 'Love's Ordeal,' is so thoroughly well done, that the author should feel encouraged to diversify, with more of such subjects, his graver meditations. Nor let him suppose, speculative as his mind is, that he is not best fitted to deal with fact and nature—the legitimate materials of the poet. 'The vision and the faculty divine' consists, not in flying off to unreal dream-worlds, but in investing with their true beauty and significance the living actions and scenes of time. Mr. Macdonald's descriptions in 'A Dream Within a Dream' possess merit of a very high order, and are always best where he appears to draw from his own observation. There is much powerful writing, too, in the 'Story of the Sea-shore.' It would seem to have been written overlooking the sea, and it makes you hear and see the waves. As a whole, the volume is such as cannot but sustain and increase the reputation of its author.

Smith's 'City Poems.'

It has been observed that the prose of Gibbon excels in the sentence, the prose of Macaulay in the paragraph. Similar distinctions are to be found among the poets. One is distinguished for the harmony and oneness of his poems as a whole. A severe self-control subordinates ornament to action, and constantly gives law to imagination. Matthew Arnold is eminent among our young poets in this respect. Another, like Dobell, displays a masterly skill in the building up of separate passages of blank verse, which answer to the paragraph in prose. Marlowe, again, among our old dramatists, inferior in some other respects, was surpassed by Shakespeare only in the melody or the might of individual lines. And in this kind of excellence Alexander Smith is no mean proficient. His longer poems owe their claim to admiration not so much to any skill of construction, dramatic force, or compass of thought, as to the frequent felicity of single lines, or of couples and triads of lines. 'Horton' is a poem dramatic only in form. 'Squire Maurice' is dramatic in reality, understanding by the word, successful impersonation.

But what has been said concerning the isolated or irregular character of these beauties is applicable only to the blank verse poems. The stanzas are wrought throughout with a truly artistic hand. Poems like 'Glasgow,' and 'The Change,' are Mr. Smith's masterpieces. They vindicate completely his poetic claims, for in that kind of poem only the genuine gift can achieve success. The last stanza in the song to Barbara is perfect of its kind. Admirable, too, is the description which opens the second part of 'A Boy's Poem.' Mr. Smith should seek, still more earnestly, choiceness, rather than abundance of metaphor. A great number of his metaphors and similes are of the right sort—legitimate and sterling beauties. But some of them should be consigned by the poet to the rhetorician. Much nonsense is talked about the necessity for

a sparing use of such ornament. If the metaphor be worked into the main substance of what is said, be neither cumbrous nor over-laboured, it is always a delight to the mind. If, however, metaphor be much used, it should very frequently be such as lies in a word, rather than a clause—an epithet, rather than a sentence. There are compressed figures and telling touches of this kind, which show that Mr. Smith is not wanting in the faculty; let him only address himself to its farther cultivation.

SECTION III.

Thoughts on Religion.

WHEN my son relinquished his pastorate at Birmingham, the people of his charge were very desirous that he should print some of his sermons. He did not promise compliance with this request, but intimated that he should probably publish some thoughts on religious subjects that might serve to remind them of past days. From the pressure of other engagements he did little in pursuance of this intention, but some of the fragments which follow were written out with his own hand with a view to publication; others are taken from his papers. As a whole, they will assist the reader to judge somewhat concerning the author's manner as a religious teacher.—EDITOR.

YOU think of the old Hebrew seers and prophets of the Lord, and are almost ready at times to envy the overwhelming glories of those visions—the eminence of that rapture which beheld the splendours of Emmanuel and the 'land of far distances'—and the grandeur of their commission who were sent, equipped so marvellously, to comfort the downcast, and warn the wavering, and confirm the strong, and reclaim the apostate, by their testimony of glory and of judgment. Sublime, indeed, that calling—blending the exultant powers of the poet with the yet loftier aspirations of the saint—beholding all nature with an eye kindling from the inner spirit's light, and seeing in the forms, the changes, and the aims of all things in the heavens above and in the earth beneath, the signs that mark the course of the Almighty—the universe their zodiac, and God their

sun! Enviable, indeed, seems that mantle of prophetic power—that hearing harmonized and raised to catch every heavenly utterance and hidden meaning in their present and their past—that insight which beheld the stars, walking in their Eastern brightness, and saw in them the emblems of those earthly powers which should be shed like leaves from their heights of pride, by the shaking judgments of the Almighty arm—which marked in the wasteful winter flood, and woodland beast roaming for his prey, the symbols of devastating visits from angered loving-kindness—which gladly recognised the types of the Messiah's kingdom in the pastoral calm of flocks, in the rich and rocking grain, in the cliff-built villages amid savage snowy heights (pictures of rural quiet wardered by stupendous strength), and in the mountains covered with aromatic plants—those vast rock-citadels hung with banners streaming out sweet odours—saw in all this the quietness, the safety, and the wealth of that far-off latter day, when the soft-falling dew of peace, and the cloudless shining of Incarnate Love, should fill the compass of the reign of mercy and the reign of might.

Envy them not! The least in the kingdom of Christ hath a fuller light. The eyes of their age grew dim with watching for that sun which lit our childhood's morning. They made ready the foundations of Christ's kingdom by prophetic words; it is for you to build it towards the topstone by memorial deeds.

The religious spirit of the past cannot be reproduced. You may disinter relics and worship them, but the manhood of each generation makes its own tools, and will not carve a truncheon from the exhumed bone of an ancestor. Men may come so to believe in ghosts that they shall cease to believe in God. There are spiritual ghoules in whose eyes the phosphorescence of the graveyard has more beauty than all the stars of heaven. How contemptible appear the attempts of Anglicanism to mimic with puny irresolute hands the insatiate self-torture of the mediæval devotees. How silly the endeavour to recall the soul of the past by stealing some

of its gestures. How sickening that sentimentalism which substitutes for the spiritual conflicts of many a noble though benighted nature, the lisping and languishing devotion, the morbid casuistries, the hysterical passion for darkness, which characterize our semi-Romish pietism. This delusive adoration for the externals of the past is scarcely more wise than the superstition of the idolatrous Tahitians, who used to collect nails and eyebrows of their departed relatives, believing that while they possessed these remains the spirits of the deceased would bless their fields and increase their store. The ritual of Rome attempts a similar feat of religious magic, and will in like manner conjure spirit into matter.

The maxim (very common in the present day), 'Be true to yourself and all is well,' requires very important qualification. All depends on the kind of self to which you endeavour to be true. If in that self evil habitually predominates, the sooner it is changed, and a better substituted, the happier for you. Consistency with your past self is perdition; inconsistency the most complete is your salvation. No man can say on the moment, and without reference to the past, I will henceforth be true to myself, so that henceforth all my errors shall at least be those of sincerity. Our present is the offspring of the past. Our disregard of conscience, our hasty excesses, our insensible abuse of things permitted, the feebleness of our desire to be at all costs morally right in every action—all these defects, in proportion as they have characterized our bygone days, are warping the judgments of to-day. The change must be more thorough. We must seek another heart. We must be ready to revise any of our former judgments about right and wrong, and to supply those obliterations which carelessness has made in our inward statute-book from that perfect outer one which is given us in Revelation. But the more true we are to an internal compass which does not point truly, the farther must we voyage from port.

There is every reason to suppose, that in heaven we shall be able accurately to remember the whole of our history upon earth. We sometimes hear such a review ranked among the pleasures of a future state. Yet now it is painful to us to recall past sin, and loss, and anguish. There are forlorn spots of reminiscence which we shun as haunted places. There are age-long hours of darkness, which have fulfilled their mission—have taught us some bitter but most blessed lesson, which we needed then to learn, and which now it is not weakness but wisdom to banish from our memory. The wholesome outgrowth having been wrought into the framework of our spiritual strength, the heart cries out, Let me never behold again the hideous origin, the black root of anguish. How, then, can it add to our happiness in heaven to muse on remembered moments which thrill the spirit with a spasm of agony, when recalled for an instant upon earth? Because such recollection here is always associated with a secret sense of possible recurrence. We are in the world of sorrow still, and the same grief, or one like unto it, or one heavier yet, may once more overtake us. But in heaven all sorrow will be remembered as past, never to return. The earthly memory is as that of a mariner saved from shipwreck, and for a time in port, but who has other voyages still to make; the heavenly, like that of one who, safe at home, will never more put forth upon the tossing, treacherous sea—who is reminded of its roar only by the wind among the forest trees which grow around his cottage.

Conscience is the authoritative faculty. It sits as judge, or it is nothing; therefore it calls in, when obeyed, peace and thankful joy, surrounds life with invisible benign ministrants to make it happy, and bids giant warders stand around it, to make it safe. It renders the poor, rich—the weak, strong—the sick in body, whole in heart.

On the other side, let it be disobeyed, and it has the whips and stings of remorse; can hang homely roofs with demon corbels grimacing at the guilty soul; can make a fluttering leaf terrible as a hand put forth to give the sign of doom; can league all nature

against the smitten imagination, so that day unto day shall utter speech, and night unto night show knowledge of the crime, while sun and moon and stars hold converse together of the sin, and stand in judgment round about the sinner.

But extreme instances of the pains or pleasures which conscience can inflict are rare. Yet it should never be forgotten that our daily habits in regard to conscience are insensibly training us toward the darker or the brighter consummation. A conscience generally obeyed lies often at the root of the cheerfulness, the equanimity, or the resignation which delight us in some men; while a conscience disobeyed is as frequently the secret canker whence come the fretfulness, the anxiety, the discontent, which grieve us in others. The watchful man of prayer is training his conscience to a delicacy like that of the electrometer, which disparts its filmy lips of gold leaf at the faintest approach of that subtle fluid which it is its office to detect. He has all day long for this practice of his religion, and every day makes him more fully one of those whom Paul describes as having their senses exercised, their spiritual perceptions refined, to discern both good and evil. On the contrary, the conscience of the careless, worldly man is applied to so seldom, that at last nothing but some great violence can move it; it has grown rigid as the brazen gates of some royal mausoleum, opened with harsh grating and long-resounding clangour only to the funeral of a king once in a generation.

A tender conscience is too often confounded with morbid scrupulosity. Many suppose that to possess a conscience thus sensitive is to harbour the most restless and harassing of guests. Those who love sin are very ready to receive this falsehood as a fact. Shakespeare makes one of his murderers say, 'Conscience is a shamefaced, troublesome thing, I'll have none of it.' The truth is, that a conscience fully taught by the Word, and ever quickened by the Spirit of God, preserves our peace, instead of bringing trouble. By watching faithfully within us against the beginnings of evil, it saves us from many a shameful surprise of sin—from drifting far from God

while we dream of nearness—from long and almost hopeless struggles with evil habits assailed too late. A conscience grown dull and heavy from disregard, awakens only when the wrong deed is done, and makes itself heard in rebuke when it ought to have been heard in warning.

There are spots on the earth whose present peace is the trophy of a noble warfare in the past. Such a scene is now so rich in its autumn plenty, and wears upon its face a look of immemorial quietness; the smoke from the homestead curls among the trees; the grain waves slumberously under the blaze of noon; the fat kine stand in the deep meadow-grass; all is safely peaceful now, because upon that very spot, in years gone by, the roar of battle was loud, and shouting onset heaped those fields with carcases, and made that brook run red, for there did brave men pour out their blood like water to thrust invasion back. Even thus, the look of everlasting calm on every glorified countenance, the endless wealth of blessedness shining in the looks of all the perfected just, will be the trophies throughout eternity of that spiritual strife wherein the Captain of our salvation wrought out deliverance for us with tears and blood. Thus, 'in the ages to come,' will God 'show forth the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us by Christ Jesus.'

Amidst scenes of affliction, the sufferer has often found relief in the thought that there are other hearts at that very time unwounded, and regions which are not darkened like his own. It is something to know that the gloom which has gathered about his lot is not the investiture of the universe. His prostrate nature raises itself yet a little higher from the dust, as he hopes to pierce the web of cloud, and wing his way out himself into one of those summer spots. You, then, whose citizenship is in heaven, think thus within your hearts: 'While I suffer here below, in that world above they sing; while I groan and wrestle, they give glory and rejoice, and that upper realm is my true home. Innumerable spirits,

all my kindred, and all jubilant, awake me after my brief sorrow.' You have heard of men entranced, whose souls seem for a time to have left behind the unconscious body. By imagination and by faith, separate your thoughts in a somewhat like manner from the flesh and from the world. Let them mount upward. Where the thoughts intensely are, there is the soul most properly. Mount, then, in forethought and in foretaste to the heavenly world; imagine yourself hearkening to the stately hymns of seraphim; see all around the ranks of angelic brightness stretching away immeasurable; cast yourself before Emmanuel on his throne, the Lamb who makes their light; pour out your heart before him, tell him all your present grief, and pray that it may prepare you for that place which he hath prepared for you. From such vision and communion your spirit will drop down to earth again, as the lark out of the cloud upon the sward—something of heaven's peace within your heart, of heaven's fragrance about your path—and you will feel, as you could not feel before, that these *are* but light afflictions, enduring for a moment.

In the fluctuations of life's sea, we are continually catching sight, and losing it again, of that brightness toward which we steer—the beacon-promise of our heavenly haven. As though we were embarked, in a little boat, among mountainous billows, we see glimpses through the driving storm of an uncertain spark far across the waters—see it glimmer only when we are mounted on the crest of a wave, and lose it as we shoot dizzily down into the trough between two weltering walls of water that shut out all but one vexed strip of sky above us.

You may have stood upon the shore of one of our Western bays, watching the great waves chase each other in, while their force does but heap higher that ridge of pebbles which protects the land. Those league-long billows, rolled forth by some far-off tempest, when ocean has been mingling the wine-cup of his storms—those huge fulling-mills of water, stamping in thunder on the sand, and flinging

the shingle in the spray-clouds towards the sky. On all this, some smiling meadow, on a seaward hillside far inland, may look brightly out, and know those rages do but guard it, building its bulwark down below—the glint of sunshine on its face is the radiance of that thought. So, Christian, look upon the plunging surges of your sea of troubles, and know that every grief which leaves you steadfast will deaden the onset of its successors. This is the use of each new trial, that, duly exercised thereby, such things may help, not harm you. The believer most tried, is best defended by memory, by experience, by more established faith. Strong then in trust, exclaim, 'Blow, winds; leap, floods; ye build my breakwater!' Say as you go forth to trouble, 'I go to be made more calm, more wise, more strong.' 'My brethren, count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations.'—James i. 2.

This world of ours is mournfully full of persons with little or no purpose in life—little or no significance or strength of will—who work and rest, eat and drink, carry on the functions of life, living in the mere vain show of present things, half true and half false; and out of the two putting together and fabricating—the plausible, the expedient, the seemly, the respectable. To their eyes, the world loses grandeur in commonness: heaven and hell are mere words of course to them; not powers—not representatives of conviction in any way.

It is a spectacle worth looking at, at least, to see a man with a strong will, an unwearying purpose, whether bad or good. And we ask wherein does this energy consist? what sets him peculiarly apart from the mass of us, as looming vast in crime, or angelic in the stature of his goodness?

Into all the questions so offering, we will not enter. But one characteristic I would mark. All these men think of their object—their purpose, at other times than when they are actually engaged in it. It colours their life—it makes their mode of viewing everything.

The man whose master passion is gain, sees all things in the mercantile view. Sunlight and forest, the glittering lake, the beetling rock—all are ticketed, are looked at and inquired into for their market value, as so much property, so much water-power, so much quarry, so much timber. He does not think of business only in his office. The plans of gain haunt him everywhere. They sit by his fireside; gold purses are in its glowing embers, or the figure-heads of his far-away ships; they visit his dreams, and his thoughts, dissolved in rest, branch out into golden veins and fanciful arborescence in the dark and silent under-realm of sleep. The loveliest valley he intersects with a viaduct; the wildest undulation of mountain nature he levels for a railway; his children are the objects of an affection, but that affection is displayed by toils to endanger them with riches.

The ambitious man—in statecraft, in professional life—how he studies and muses, how he ransacks the past for precedent and wisdom, how he labours to know men that he may use them, how fervid he can be, and how calm; what indignant virtue, or what fascinating suppleness, he learns to display; he lives and plans for this in his hours of thought and retirement, not merely when actually engaged in the routine of official work or practical engagement.

So with the man of learning and the man of taste—the man who loves beauty or who loves knowledge for their own glorious sakes. Does the student think of his books only when they lie open before his eyes? They walk with him, they talk with him, they seem to thrust away the voice and presence with which he actually holds intercourse. It seems as though his mind had been shut up with his book-mark in his book, and he had forgotten to take it out. In like manner, the artist is filling his nature with resources for future effort in seasons which seem to others given up to idle reverie. The felicity of design, or the marvellous rapidity of execution, which distinguishes his most favoured intervals of labour, spring commonly from the profitable occupation of those periods apparently surrendered to mere leisure.

All these men habitually think upon their chosen pursuit at other times than those in which they are professedly engaged in it. Were their thoughts given to their work only when actually about it, their motives would suffer gradual enfeeblement; they could never hold on as they do. So should it be, in some measure at least, with the religious man. He who only thinks of God when formally engaged in some act of worship, will think to little purpose. We are God's servants in proportion as we refer all our actions to God—as we begin and end each day with Him—as we think of Him most during certain seasons, in order to realize more duly the nearness of His love at ordinary times. Such was the religion of David—'I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand I shall not be moved.'

It may seem paradoxical to say, that those who plan least concerning the future are its best architects; and that those who leave it most contentedly as beyond their control, do in fact retain it most largely in their own power. And yet if any one so says, experience will bear him out in the main. For those events which we can in some measure foresee, hardly ever fall out just as we had expected. Our temptations do not assail us with just the weapons that we looked for; nor do our sorrows array themselves with all those sad accompaniments we fancied; and our joys do not come with that flocking troop of delights which we pictured to ourselves beforehand. Our anticipations do not reach the future; they are confined to the chambers of our brain, and cannot travel the intervening weeks and months, and do a work at the end of a given period. But a vigorous discharge of to-day's duty does reach out into future days. So we may be shaping a future of which we are not thinking for a moment. We compel every vanquished temptation to contribute towards the cost of the war; our resources grow ampler with every struggle; and our spiritual sword is sharpened, not blunted, by every stroke we strike. We do not know with what exact array the adversary will at some future time oppose us,

but this we do know, that to-day's manhood will in some way nerve the arm that is to strike on that unknown to-morrow. The mariner best prepares himself for storms, not by imagining, as he paces the deck, a clouded sky and a loud wind, but by looking carefully to the timbers and the cordage of his ship. The day that is now passing over our heads does in fact contain, and will partly colour, many days that lie as yet below the horizon. The more we yielded to sin in times past, the more formidable do we find the power of sin to-day. The Physician of souls has saved the life which sin's fever so imperilled, but we never quite recover in this world the weakness which that malady has left behind. Let us remember, then, in every present temptation, that on our successful resistance depends, not alone our immediate peace of mind, but future vigour and future victory. The strength obtained by the discharge of a duty apparently trivial, may contribute at another day to our victorious passage through some most momentous trial. So the thrifty householder has sometimes found that a little sum, laid up by present self-denial, for some future trifling gratification, may answer in the end a far more serious purpose, and shut out destitution or save a life in some unforeseen calamity. Let us, therefore, endure the trials and attempt the duties of the present hour, as those who see their yet unborn to-morrows shut up within to-day, as the seeds within the seed-vessel.

Nor is such a habit of mind of service only as regards the sterner aspects of life. The anticipation of joy does not by any means increase our actual happiness when the pleasure is arrived. But it *is* probable that we shall enjoy some future gratification of magnitude all the more for making the most of the lesser gratifications within our reach at the present moment. Those men make the best use of a sudden accession of fortune who have wisely husbanded their narrower means. Those enjoy most richly the greater incidents of prosperity who can find pleasure most readily in the minor satisfactions of a moderate and ordinary estate. Our time is so much gold and silver, given us that we may coin it into the cur-

rency of daily work and usefulness. Our life is wasted if the morning finds us gazing on some cloud made golden by the dawn, and the evening upon bars of mist made silver by the moon, while the allotted ore lies at our feet untouched. How much of thankful, sober peace, that might have made the present almost sufficient in itself, do many even good men lose, in their impatience for the arrival of some hoped-for pleasure or success. The present offers to their lips, not indeed a cup of intoxicating joy, but a refreshing draught. They are tired and thirsty, but they refuse to taste a drop. They are waiting for the vines to be planted, and the grasses to grow in some distant country which shall furnish them with some surpassing and half-fabulous vintage. They are impatient to escape from that present hour which (if they would but see it) is impatient to make them happy. What should we say of that moody man, who, having returned to his home after the business of the day, should presently quit his loving wife, his welcoming children, and his blazing fireside, to go out into the dark and windy night, to walk to and fro among the fires and ashes of one of our mining districts, calculating the wealth those pitchy depths were to yield him, feeding with those never-extinguished flames the fire of covetousness in his heart, without a look towards the stars above—without a thought of the love and light of home! Yet so do multitudes shut themselves out from the purer, simpler pleasures God has laid ready for them, while their restless thoughts are hoping or fearing in impatient expectation of some dearly-bought, and yet far meaner gain. 'Let, then, the morrow take heed for the things of itself.' 'Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.'

'He that is spiritual, judgeth (discerneth) all things; yet he himself is judged of no man.' The apostle speaks of the gift of the Spirit as necessary that we may 'know the things that are freely given to us of God.' The gifts of God, however wonderful, will

only be estimated with any approach to adequacy by those who have received His Spirit. Miraculous communications of knowledge would still be something without us, something foreign, if the infinitely Wise had not himself visited our inmost nature. It takes the heavenly mind rightly to understand earthly things. We do not rightly value the least blessings till we have received the greatest. ' Then most truly do we estimate the goodness which provides our daily bread, when we have partaken of that bread of life which is from heaven. We are never so thankful for the bread that perisheth as when we have learnt that we live not by bread alone, but by the word of God,—as when we make it our meat and drink to do our Father's will. The Apostles, receiving their instruction and their commission from above, trusted to Divine teaching for the expression of their message. 'Not in the words which man's wisdom speaketh.' They compared spiritual things with spiritual. They received the farther disclosures made to them in the spirit becoming men who had been with Jesus. The fact that the Gentiles were to be called in—that once-hidden, now open mystery—that scandal to the Jew, who compared things spiritual with the carnal things of his narrow-minded pride—was to them no stumbling-block, because they compared that strange 'new commandment' with the character and words of Him with whom they had gone about doing good, and found a perfect harmony. Again, they estimated their spiritual mission not by any selfish or earthly standard, but as spiritual men. They did not, like Jonah, undertake a mighty enterprise in a mean or self-regardful spirit. As the work was, so were the men, and the messenger was lost in the message. How many of our difficulties, both theoretical and practical, arise from our looking at spiritual things with our earthly eyes; from expecting a kind of evidence to truth, or a kind of reward in duty, which belong to a sphere totally distinct. If we would look at Divine truth with that humility and self-distrust which spiritual things require from beings whose highest attainment in religious knowledge here is that of a forward childhood, how many

little perplexities would lose their power to trouble? If in self-forgetfulness we would sow spiritually, and not expect to reap carnally, how rarely would our voice of complaint be heard?

The spiritual man judges or discerns all things in proportion to his spirituality. He is in possession of the true standard by which to estimate everything. He has received a measuring-reed from the city of the New Jerusalem, whereby he lays out the proportions of our earthly encampment on the plains of Time. He judges things seen, not by their outside merely, but also by that soul or inner life which they derive from the unseen. He recovers through the second Adam, at least in some measure, the prerogative of naming God's creatures. The first dazzling sight of the glories of the world to come, or a partial and but preliminary insight into the hope behind the veil, may perhaps cause earthly things to appear but so much irksomeness, triviality, or privation; and divine impatience, in its youthful heat, will loudly utter its contempt of all things here. But a steadier, longer looking upwards, a closer and more constant converse, a more persistent inquiry, and the ripened judgment of a longer trial, will restore the lost balance. He who, for a short time, smitten by the heavenly brightness, cared not at all to discern or judge things here below, learns in a stage of higher advance to call nothing common or unclean. A too ascetic or a too ideal religionism is left behind for one more simple, more benign, and more profoundly true. The ripened spiritual judgment which discerneth all things, sees a store of heavenly uses laid up by God in things earthly—sees in the visible the steps of the ladder by which we mount to the unseen—sees the nascent glory in the long trial of faith and patience—sees that the least wheel in the swarthy loud whirring machinery of time is in some way indispensable to the repose and consummation of eternity—sees, too, that Heaven is not wholly beyond this life, but in some part essentially in it, as the root of the flower is within the mould. The spiritual man who so discerns is 'judged of no man;' that is to say, by no one who has not within him the same standard by which to judge. To the

man who has only some common standard of selfishness, expediency to judge by, the high enthusiasm of the Christian will seem often half insane. So Festus judged of Paul. Minds the most apostolic in their temper are alike incomprehensible to the common man of the world in what they do, and in what they do not. The Jewish world could not understand how it could be that, supposing Christ to have done so much, he should have done no more. If he had really cast out Satan, why did he not come down from the cross? Many a time has the world been at a loss which to wonder at most, the long-suffering, the self-control, the seeming apathy of Christians in some things, their restless, resistless, almost suicidal zeal in others. They call that structure a monstrosity, which no repetition of their tiny measure can reduce to scale. They will embrace any contradiction rather than admit such an incalculable superiority. They will attribute to the bravest disinterestedness the meanest artifices of ambition. They will take refuge from the admission of an incomprehensible virtue in the supposition of an incomprehensible villany. 'We,' says the Apostle, 'have the mind of Christ;' and like Christ, have Christians been condemned by the mind of this world. 'The servant is not greater than his Lord.'—1 Cor. ii. 12—16.

It would often be well if men would exercise their imagination, not in conjuring up visions of wealth and honour, based on some slight temporary success, but if they would endeavour rather to form some conception of the sin they might possibly accumulate, if some one fault of which they had just been guilty were allowed to multiply itself unhindered by any powerful check. Our moral nature has not, like the physical, a native power of self-recovery. When sin has once entered the soul, it is as though a race of strange giants had been admitted to settle within a town inhabited by men. The citizens would be at the mercy of the strong ones. They could never calculate from one day to another to what extremity of outrage they might not be subjected at the hands of

these monstrous inmates, if seized by some caprice, irritated by some misunderstanding, or inflamed by wine. We may imagine a young man, awakened to some sense of the fearful potency possessed by sin, musing somewhat thus on the life which lies before him,—sitting down, we will say, on the last night of an old year to picture to himself the lot which may be in store for him—'It must be true, what I have so often heard, that one passion uncontrolled can make a man miserable in the midst of every conceivable form of prosperity. Let me, then, endeavour to realize it as a fact in my own case. Surely there must be something wrong if I live in the habitual acknowledgment of a number of truths without ever allowing them to determine my choice and form my course of action. I suppose myself rich, I live in a mansion, I look round upon the wood and water, the hill and dale of my magnificent estate, I enjoy the incense of surrounding homage, I am followed by troops of friends. But let me remember that all this outward prosperity will soon be to me simply the daily course of things, I shall take the wealth and splendour as something for granted; I shall no more be continually thinking how happy I am in these possessions, than I am now continually thinking how happy I am not to be stretched on a bed of anguish, but to enjoy the health I have—not to be a beggar in the street, but to have my present regular, if narrow, income. My happiness now is scarcely drawn at all consciously from my competence and health, though I should be wretched if either were withdrawn. I take these blessings, I must confess, very much as matters of course. They are the foundation, and I only count that as so much positive happiness and gain which brings so much pleasure over and above. It would be just the same were my resources multiplied twentyfold, and were my station far higher. I should soon be accustomed to my carriages and horses and entertainments, and be looking forward to some gratification to be superadded to my sumptuous routine. But beyond this—suppose me in the midst of all my wealth tormented by hatred or envy of some adversary or rival. None of those possessions would retain even their limited power to produce satisfaction, if I had a Mordecai

to make all wormwood! I was jealous the other day of ——'s success. I enjoyed nothing all the while the torturing passion was holding me; and yet, but for that inward suffering, how delighted I should have been?

'That man who has made his fortune—whom the world points at and worships for success—whose brow is contracted by a scowl of envy, whose irritable tones proclaim that peace is not among his inmates. It is myself. That one passion might have been growing while my money was growing, and have come to that—poisoning all my riches. Who is that blinded, thankless man I see thrusting away the gifts Heaven sends him—whom it would seem as though all things strove in vain to make happy, and who had chosen sullenness, and discontent, and gnawing misery for his lot? Who that cruel, hard-hearted one who brings so many scalding tears into eyes that love him? Who that reckless and improvident man, so neglectful of his home duties, that men say, when his children are guilty and disgraced, remember what a vile father they had—and the excuse suffices? That other, with blood upon his hand—so furious have his passions grown? Oh, what horror in his heart—what a hideous spectacle is that remorse, that despair!

'These men—they are myself, any one of them, if my malevolence, my selfishness, my discontent, my angry passions, are allowed to carry me away. And how can I be sure some one of them will not? The worst of traitors and murderers would once have been shocked could they have seen their future selves, as I am shocked at these portraits in the air. No one becomes a villain in a moment. And what power sin may come in with I know not—once admitted, I feel it has already carried me farther many a time than I had ever thought—and what may it not do?

'I must commit this nature, whose possibilities are so terrible—that may grow so monstrous—into the hands of one strong, and wise, and good enough to forgive and cleanse, and discipline and preserve it. Yes, thou, oh Saviour, wilt cast out none who come to thee. Life is too terrible for me to encounter alone. Lead me

not into temptation; prevent me by thy goodness; crush that portentous May-be, while it is yet unrealized. School and smite me as thou wilt, but save me from myself. Let me say *now*, 'Into thy hands I commend my spirit'—or I shall not be able to say it as Stephen did when he came to die. Then I shall be able to say with thy servant—calm in the prospect of his martyrdom—'I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.'—2 Tim. i. 12.

The Apostle prays for the Ephesians, that 'the eyes of their understanding might be opened'—for the Philippians, that their 'love may abound more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment'—and for the Colossians, that they 'might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.' Religion (observe here) is not concerned with the sentiment or feeling merely. The understanding, as the language of these passages clearly indicates, is also engaged. There are certain facts to be made known—there is a certain evidence afforded—on which our faith rests, and which makes the basis of the *reason* we can render for the hope that is in us. So the critical, logical faculty, the balancing of probabilities, the weighing of reasons, is necessary in religion as in daily life, if we would come to just and enlightened conclusions concerning the will of God,—if we would be saved from puerilities, pietisms sentimentalities, devout follies, and extravagances innumerable. Judgment is requisite for the harmonizing of our zeal, for the keeping of our greatest earnestness for the greatest aims, not expending it miserably on the white or black of a garment, on a candlestick or a musical instrument.

There is then a knowledge, a science, in which the Christian is to be proficient. All Christians desire to do the will of God. The believer who is most advanced in the kind of knowledge St. Paul has in view, is the man who makes the fewest mistakes concerning what the will of the Lord is. It is the peculiarity of the Christian dis-

pensation, as compared with the prescription of the Old Economy, that certain general precepts are given us, and the particular application left to our own Christian judgment—to the wisdom (be it more or less) of our supposed manhood. Not that under the Old Testament dispensation there was no space left for such freedom, no such discipline or knowledge provided for. No legislative enactments, however minute, could lay down a rule for every one of the moral questions rising up with the countless events of daily life. It was one of the sins of the scribes of our Lord's time, that they attempted too much in this way. Casuistry multiplies instead of diminishing sin.

What a science then is this in which we are all learners—to ascertain the will of God concerning us. To escape the trouble of this study some have betaken themselves to an infallibility, directly or indirectly. A case of conscience occurs. Is such an act right or wrong? The Pope would know, thinks the Romanist. But he is a long way off. My confessor is his representative, however, and he will tell me. What a strange thing is this delegated infallibility! It saves me the trouble of inquiring for myself (and with the trouble the development, intellectual and spiritual, which accompanies such exercise), but this infallibility is not uniform. Father Ambrose says I may make a certain bargain. Father Ombre says I may not. So men choose the most easy-going infallibility; and private judgment is not more variable.

To know in particular instances the will of God—how does every conscientious man long for more guidance here! We have the promise of guidance. How can we be sure, however, that we do not mistake our own volitions for the counsels of the Spirit? We may diminish the danger. 1st. Deliberate solemnly as in the sight of the Searcher of hearts. 2nd. Weigh as comprehensively as possible the circumstances in which you stand—for Providence is the will of God. 3rd. The right determination will most likely be arrived at in a negative form. The problem is reduced to an alternative, and conscience decides against one of the two possible

courses. This decision arrived at in patient, passive expectancy of light from above will scarce ever be far from right. 4th. Here, as in everything else, good sense, painstaking, the discipline which a good use of our faculties in other matters will impart, is not to be underrated. Good intentions are not enough. Even prayers are inadequate, if our judgment is infirm through neglect of our intellectual faculties. Even the grace of God, saith an old divine, giveth not common sense.

For your comfort remember that the difficulty does not continue always so great as it is at first. The senses exercised to discern between good and evil do their office the more quickly by practice. A conscientious man in business finds at starting many such difficulties. But let him choose manfully the safe side in the first few instances, and each such triumph makes a precedent, and gives him a strength and a sufficient reason for the next. The rules with which you start in business, young men, be careful of them!

But you will find in the Epistle to the Ephesians that the soul and principle of this knowledge lies in one commanding object—'The exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe.'

In every art or science the application and detail thereof is best performed by him who is most imbued with the knowledge of its great principles, and most kindled with the enthusiasm proper to its aims. So with religion. The mind convinced of this, that the will of God is no cold law, but that what He commands He gives, that the power of the Saviour is sufficient, will see things in their right light. The wisdom of which St. Paul speaks is that which approves things that are more excellent.

First of all, then, set before your eyes the surpassing glory of Christ, and the blessedness of His service.

Secondly. The vastness of the power committed to Him to sanctify you—even that which raised Him from the dead and sets Him above all worlds—that is the power which shall work in you. It is an ocean. The limitation to your supply is simply that of your faith. 'Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.' 'Ask and receive, that

your joy may be full.' Look by faith through the veil of the sensible—see that glory—hear those songs—behold those myriads. This is a power to *youward* who believe!

He who best distinguishes 'the things that differ,' will always have a large list of things indifferent.

Every season of blissful communion with God, in which we exclaim—This is the gate of heaven, is for its time the farthest attainment of our souls. We have known nothing higher, more heavenly, more self-transcending. It marks the limit of our spiritual being so far. It is the gate of our soul where it opens on heaven—the gate of both alike. But as we grow and enjoy still higher knowledge, and seasons of yet fuller blessedness, it is as though the soul's city outgrew its old gateway, and what was once country is now suburb, and what was once suburb is now city. So we preserve the venerable old gate in the midst of the city, but we have a new boundary now where fields were. Thus do we embrace more of heaven, and leave ourselves behind as we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Christian surveying a course of difficult duty is comforted by reading the promise of *wisdom*. But the request must be made in faith, without wavering, in singleness of mind. The petitioner must come with a due sense of the value of the gift, and with a strong (no double-minded half-purpose) and abiding determination to persevere in the duties before him. Then, if really in earnest for the attainment of that farther degree of sanctification and usefulness, he will use in some measure worthily the divine supplies. Otherwise the very grace would be neglected—a gift unstirred up. The man lacking in real earnestness of desire after sanctification, does not receive, because he would not have used, the needed help. If a man were deputed by a sovereign to arrange the disturbances of a troubled province, and, feeling the difficulty of the work, sent for fuller powers, and his monarch despatched to him servants with

high authority and great force, to be at his disposal, and carry out all his plans: if such a man, when his successor came, should remit his first alacrity, and refuse to give orders to, and to employ, the officers and the powers at his disposal, such a commissioner would resemble the double-minded man—the man who has faint wishes after holiness, continually overpowered by heartier wishes after mere worldly good. What wonder if such a man complains and finds his work growing above his strength?—James i. 5—8.

When you look back on certain years spent in a locality from which you are now removed, remember that so will your whole life appear to you when you come to die. How short seem those years in the comprehensive glance of memory! What thousands of petty anxieties that harassed your days are now as utterly forgotten as the shapes of last winter's clouds. How often did we disquiet ourselves in vain. And those faults, and those mistakes and omissions—now all irreparable! So it will be at the end of life. How important, then, are frequent observations to determine, like the mariner, the course of the vessel. How necessary to live each day our best, if we would not look back with vain regret on months and years of comparatively feeble or useless life!

Psalm xxix.—Written, we may suppose, during some terrible tempest, or in memory of one. David sings of the thunder, that voice of the Lord, and of the lightning which pierces with its flaming sword the most secret gloom of the forest. Over all the fury of the tornado, and throned on the devastating waters of the inundation, reigneth the Lord of Hosts. When He drives the storm, heaven and earth seem mingled in uproar. When He stills it, heaven and earth smile to each other in bursting sunshine, and the birds break forth into singing. An unevangelical theme, as some good persons might think. What have all these winds and waters to do with the way of salvation? Yet David understands how these works of God are witnesses to His word. The might of

the tempest tells him of the strength God will give His people, and the returning gladsomeness when the storm has rolled away represents the blessing of their peace.

We seek a sign wrongfully, like the Jews, whenever we say—If I had a voice from heaven to say this doubtful act is wrong I would forbear; but under the present uncertainty I venture uninquiring.

In the case of the Jews asking a sign and receiving only the declaration that if they destroyed the temple of His body He would raise it up in three days, we see their demand at once complied with and refused. Rejecting the *gracious* signs of His miracles, they were to receive, in the working out of their own hatred, a *dreadful* sign of the truth of His words. He would rise after they had slain Him, even as He said; and His blood would be on their heads. So, if men do not believe the promises and warnings of the Gospel, they find afterwards, in the hardening yoke of sin, in the evil consequences of transgression even in this life, sign *in themselves* that those warnings were no phantom terrors—no priestly invention, but a declaration of God's eternal laws of moral government—laws that might have been *for*, but are now *against* them.

We ask God to show us pity in our trouble—we should show Him patience. If the one is like Him, the other is becoming for us.

Ratiocination and rationality may sometimes exist in inverse ratios.

'We love Him because He first loved us.' Here is a motive—not the only motive of love to God. It is not the first motive in elevation, but the first in time. No one who loves God will refuse to say this. Every lover of God must acknowledge that God has been beforehand with him. If He had not given me His son—His

Spirit—I had never loved Him. Had He not revealed Himself as my Saviour, I had seen nothing to awaken trust. I might have seen at times some glory in the divine perfections such as I imagined the attributes necessary to a Supreme Being. But it would not have been a glory for me. It would have been a light between which and me an impassable gulf was fixed. It would not have been a 'beauty that I should have desired.' But now, having hope of reconciliation—having peace with God—being a son—I can take up all that God has done and merge it in the ocean of what He *is*, and say I love that character, without present thought of myself; I contemplate God, the Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, and am lost in admiration, adoration, rapture! But if I had not first recognised what He has done for us—if gratitude had not laid the foundation of all, this higher stage had been for ever inaccessible. The beauties of wild rock and wood are unheeded by him who travels in peril of his life from fierce inhabitants. The thicket and the gorge, behind which an enemy may lurk, are not beautiful. Let the same traveller know that every peasant in those glens will have a greeting, every cottage a welcome for him, and he admires at his leisure what before did but remind him in vain of home and its warm safety. And so with higher things.

Surely those are wrong who (like Whately) deny that it is any argument in favour of the Christian religion to say that we feel it suits our wants. For so, it is objected, would the Arab say of Mahomet's creed. Yet some religion men must have. And the religion that satisfies most of the wants of which they are conscious will be accepted by them. Better that than nothing. Men will eat bread made of bark in lack of wheat. Better so than starve. But the modern inquirer can say—I see in the Christian religion that which best satisfies my wants out of all the religions known to us in the world. It is not a substitute for something better. It is the best known or conceived for this purpose. Here surely is an argument not to be lightly thrown away.

The fallacy of Emerson's Essay on Self-reliance consists in confounding our *idiosyncrasy* which we need not give up, with our *sins*, which we must. A thousand different characters, each developed according to a primary and righteous ideal, would each have a full right to existence—each be best in its place. But these same thousand characters recklessly pushing, absorbing, transgressing, exacting right and left, have not that right, and are varieties illegitimate, not legitimate—a chaos, not a cosmos.

SECTION IV.

Poetry.

MY son went to Manchester in 1843, fresh from his classical studies in London. His taste disposed him to keep up those studies for some time afterwards. The *Antony* and the *Disenchantment* were both written in 1845, in the twenty-second year of his age, and they are now printed as serving in some measure to illustrate that stage of his culture. The writer was a great admirer of *Comus*, and the *Antony* is such a Masque as a classic poet might be supposed to have written on the shores of the Mediterranean two thousand years ago. It embodies the popular belief of those times. No modern reader must be expected to be interested in the story of this piece, but the poetry may not be the less real because lavished on a theme which was once a religious creed, but is so no longer.

During the last ten years of his life, the author wrote little or nothing in poetry. Circumstances, and especially the success of his prose writings, disposed him to restrict his efforts through that period almost entirely to prose. His critical faculty, as a judge of poetry, ripened greatly, but he ceased to attempt any realization of his own ideal in that form.

ANTONY. A MASQUE.

Time—Midnight.

NEMESIS *appears above the city of Alexandria.*

From your ever-falling fountains,
Where the moonbeams cannot rest,
From your emerald thrones, the mountains,
Where the storm in clouds is drest:

From your continents and islands,
By the fickle waves carest,
From your winter-haunted highlands,
From the cloud-homes of the blest;
Come, ye gods of earth and water,
Come, ye gods of wood and hill;
To the judgment, to the slaughter,
Bring the witness that shall kill.
For the weeping and the dying
Shall be many on the morrow,
In the city that is lying
In the slumber of its sorrow.

Enter BACCHUS.

On my golden-orbed throne,
With its starry glancing eyes,
Where all earth to me is shown
As I muse thereon alone,
I hear, and I arise.
O'er the rugged cloven peak,
Where I make the thunder speak,
And oft time, at dead of night
Do appear its crown of light;
I have sped upon the breath
Of a song of love and death,
That was sung by a bard of mine,
As he walked in a wailing wood—
I come at thy call, divine,
With words of evil and good.

Spare the hero, spare,
Dark spirit of the air;
But my lot is in the urn
To condemn the false cold fair:
Now be just, arraigner stern.

'Neath the charm of my watching,
His restless life-ocean,
Loud sounding in sunlight
Shook earth with its motion.

And eastward and westward
Went ebbing and flowing,
While conquest laughed bright in
The track of its going.
In council, in banquet,
I winged his words ever,
And baffled before him
The sword and the quiver.
My name I set on him,
And my desolation
I gave him to scatter
From nation to nation;
But now lie his laurels
All dead 'neath her smiling,
Whose love-wine is poison,
Whose truth is beguiling.
If pity thou canst not
That sorrowful ruin,
Oh! frown on the falseness
That wrought his undoing.

Venus. Maiden, frowning, listen, listen;
Venus trembling, weeping, pleading;
See her heavy eyelids glisten,
While her words of interceding
From her wounded heart come bleeding.
Spartan Helen in her sheen,
Was not more beloved by me
Than this dark Egyptian Queen.

One still twilight o'er the sea,
Riding on my evening star,
I arose upon the birth
Of this lovely lotus-flower,
Budding on life's stormy water,
And I left my trembling car,
And I stept upon the earth,
And I swore by that charmed hour
This sweet child shall be my daughter.
In her eyes I have my shrine—
Goddess, wrong not rights divine!

Ne'er did she forsake my kiss
For the sullen Artemis ;
Spurned not any loving thought
Which into her heart I brought ;
But with wonder warm and mild
Nursed such, even from a child,
Till the heart where they took root
Sent up blossoms, sent up fruit
Of the loveliest hues, to rise
And deck her cheek, her lip, her eyes—
So that all where'er she went
In their hearts' deep firmament
Set her highest, worshipping
As they came within the ring
Of her bright enamouring.
If the victor's bird so high
Floats not now o'er Antony,
Was not all well lost for love ?
Blame not her, for hath not she
For the eagle given the dove ?
Is not love the brightest, sweetest
Sea that men can wander through ?
Is not life the frailest, fleetest
Bark that e'er on waters flew ?
Both did well to flee when sorest
Death and danger prest around them,
And to roam the summer forest
Ere the hopeless winter found them.
Seek them out, great Nemesis,
Some Hesperian isle of bliss,
Cradle them from all alarms
In old Ocean's kindly arms—
Let Apollo every night
Visit them in their delight,
While his steeds a time stand still
Going down the western hill :
For whatever hap might be,
Ever were they true to me.

The River-god Cydnus. Let her beauty on my wave
Be a token that shall save,

And the pleading of my river
Make thee pity and forgive her,
For beneath her and above her
Sky and water join to love her.
I was at a noonday sport
With the naïads of my court,
As they wove me crowns of reeds
Interstrung with pearly beads,
When on sudden I was ware
Of a bark that passed above,
And of musick on the air
Whereunto the ship did move,
And of beauty sitting there
That did make the musick love.
Up I looked and saw the lines
Of the silver oars each side,
While the keel that hung between
From me hid the lovely queen,
As a cloud doth intervene
Coming underneath the moon;
But with many a ray full soon
On each side she overshines,
And like oars I've seen the beams
Send their sidelong silver gleams
Slanting through the airy tide.
My waves were witched and thither fled,
To catch the hues of blue and red
That from the hull and sails were shed;
Crowds did leaping, sparkling, rise
To learn to glitter by her eyes,
While others, when she passed them by,
Ran murmuring to the shores to die.
All sweet incense odours flying
Did embalm the musick dying;
All the zephyrs came to pray,
'Prythee, let us bear away
These sweet scents unto our bowers,
We are debtors to the flowers;
And we may
Now repay

Them with other scents of ours.'
When I see the south wind roll
Toward my mouth that white foam scroll,
Which is known unto us all
As the call
To our Father's ocean hall—
Thither can I go and boast
That my honour is the most,
As we lean upon our urns,
Telling in a ring by turns,
What divinest of earth's daughters
We have borne upon our waters.
Oh! the memory of that day
Will within me dwell alway—
Through and through me went the quiver
Of my love-delighted river.
Hear me, as I plead with thee,
Plead for her—but not for him—
Oftentimes have such as he
Stained with blood my margin trim,
And made my river's silver dim;
And many a time when I would ride,
Have clogged my wheels and stayed my tide,
And scared my white-maned river horses
With heaps of ghastly swaying corses.

Nemesis. All honoured gods, your prayers, your complaints
Lie on my heart, where just and tender thoughts
Have wrought in me the image of the doom
That must befall the Roman and his Queen.
They are condemned: nay, river, murmur not
Nay, start not, Bacchus—Venus, rock asleep!
That child, thy heart. That sunny sea of smiles
Wherein looked Cæsar, Pompey, Antony,
And saw their heaven, shall be choked up with ruin.
The hero that stood high on history's peak,
Made red with rays from others' fading glories,
Which in life's ebbing sea he caused to set;
Who thence sent winds to every quarter forth,

O'erburthened with his fame—is fallen, is fallen.
Thou, Bacchus, may'st have breathed upon his stars
To make them fortunate—but from the grave
Wherein he threw his false soon-dying love,
For wronged Octavia's heavenly innocence,
Hath risen a voice that flies o'er all the world,
Asking where Mercy is—to banish her.
Thou, Venus, may'st have taken joy to grace her,
But well thou know'st how fleeting are thy gifts:
She wronged them—and thy precious pearls she melted
In the harsh acid of a Circe-cup,
Whose draught from those lost men who thought it sweet
Reason's heaven-moulded head unfixed for ever.
The Asian pomp—the wasteful luxury,
The countless nights out-mocked with banqueting,
Rise up a pageant of dark witnesses—
And these shall fan them to their shameful slumber,
Sidelong with death and with each other laid.
He that made blind the weeping eyes of the world
With dust of his great battles—through wide earth
Swept like the turbulent and still empty winds
That cry for room in the broad cope of heaven,
Who ploughed the bosom of white sleeping peace
With yawning devastation, and stirred up
The weary couchant spirit of the time,
Making it fell, and bloody, ravenous—
Shall turn away from everything he loved—
No more woo danger—no more laugh with pleasure;
But buy of Rest, which most of all he hated,
With life's red drops for coin—a lasting silence.
And thus will I, while the loud world goes round,
Anoint the fevered head of wrong contention
With drowsy-dropping calms to make him die—
Will set up one and will put down another,
Filling out hollow greatness for an hour;
And then recalling the slight breath I gave,
Fold up the shrivelled nothing in a grave.
Thus will I weave, and weave, till I have wrought
The funeral garment of the winded world,

And those loud-roaring, wolfish waves ambitions,
Are bridled with an everlasting dumbness,
And the consuming Earth shall only be
A flickering corpse-light on the grave of Time.

END OF FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

The Scene changes to the Streets of Alexandria—solemn Music is heard— BACCHUS, VENUS, *and a train of Divinities move in procession through the streets, chaunting each a lament.*

Bacchus. Farewell! Call me to-night—
Drown care in my delight,
Then sleep till morning light—
I must not hear thee, Antony!
With trailing Thyrsus—solemn tread
And drooping head,
Unchapleted,
Whence are tears, not odours shed,
Mourning for the loved, the dead—
I must leave thee, Antony!
In the morn thou shalt awaken,
Wake to see the traitors leave thee,
When of all thou art forsaken,
Death shall open to receive thee.
Let these night airs be gently shaken
With the lorn farewell we weave thee
Ye who loved him—ere the tread
Of death-delaying Night is sped,
And Morn ariseth bloody red,
Let your funeral words be said
For the living who is dead.

Venus. Oh, sad—and yet more sad,
All dirges are too glad
For the one loved best
Goeth to her rest;
And all those sweet smiles,
All those winning wiles,

That soft pleading breath,
Will be delightful food
To feed the wild beast Death
In his oblivious wood.
Sweet Flower! I did thee raise
To be the wide world's praise—
Now but a few short days
And thou art dust.
The cold insidious clasp
Of that death-bringing asp,
In life and hope's fast gasp
Thy only trust.
This world is far too rude
For love to live;
Ill comes of all the good
We to it give.

Isis. Oh, tread slowly, slowly,
Ye irreverent Hours;
How dare ye go so fast?
Ye are the last, the last—
Mock not this melancholy—
Grief divine is holy,
And what grief is ours!
Ah, me! for many a day
Have I seen those I loved,
Kingdoms and kings,
Greatest and fairest things,
From 'neath my sheltering wings,
Borne far away.
And now with eye unmoved
I should behold
One more made cold—
My heart should not now be
With grief so weak and wild,
And yet I weep for thee
As though I were a child.
Farewell! farewell!
The worst is nearly o'er—
One saddest tear and full,
Upon thy tomb shall fall,

Then I will weep no more.
For never shall I see
Mortal again like thee,
Upon whose frail fair clay
I can set love so vain,
So that no more again
Shall I thus sadly say,
Farewell! farewell!

Cydnus.—My every wave
Shall lift his voice in murmurous lament;
From every cave
A hollow wail shall be resent,
And every whispering reed
That 'mid the fluttering grasses
My waters feed,
Shall tremulously tell
Of how this loss befell,
To every wind that passes.
And when my Nereids fair
Would sing some thoughtless strain,
I'll make them, in a ring
Within some sandy dell,
Sit round me while I tell,
Beneath the listening waves, this tale
And softly all shall sing
Farewell! farewell! [*Exeunt.*

The story of 'The Disenchantment' belongs to the Middle Age. It embraces Christian elements, mingled with others derived from the Paganism and Romance of Northern Europe. 'The Sangreal' stands at the head of this class of fictions (see pages 210, 285, *et seq.*). The writer himself says of this piece, in a letter dated 1846:—'It is no picture of real life, and I fear not even natural, but the complete romance of the thing has made it rather a favourite with me. I spent some happy hours in the composition.' It is easy to believe that the licence to elaborate scenery so much like a paradise restored, and to delineate an unearthly goodness triumphing over the most formidable assaults of evil, was the real secret of the pleasure felt by the author in writing this poem. In the manuscript, the scenes are illustrated by some romantic landscape sketches.

THE DISENCHANTMENT.

The Persons.

ARGALINE.	AN INFERIOUR SPIRIT.
ELFGARD.	OLYMPIA.
PYRRAEUS, a dæmon, as guardian to Olympia.	AN ANGEL.

SCENE—*An enchanted Castle on an island in a lake, surrounded by richly-wooded mountains.*

(*Enter* ARGALINE *and* ELFGARD *beneath the walls.*)

Elfgard. Here will we rest, then. Each shall bind the wounds
He gave the other; and if so it must be
When vigour lives again, let our truce die
And more be made.

Argaline. But now let all be love,
And, like these rocks that loving live with flowers,
Let flinty strife and twined amity
Dwell in our hearts together. Each unconquered,
And each firm bent to conquer, we are one
So for awhile. Tell me now whence art thou,
And wherefore here so fierce a guardian,
Slayer of all enamoured venturers
That hither yet have come, led by the fame
Of that enclouded star, Olympia?

Elfgard. Oft have I listened to defeated foes,
Or granted ere they asked; but never yet

Met I a man that could, while yet unvanquished,
Win me to accept so willing after war,
The bauble peace, and stoop to show him reason
Wherefore I fought—but in thy face I see
Firmness and beauty wedded so with sadness,
As makes me long for a more perfect teacher
Than is thy sword to tell me who thou art.
Let us sit here.

Argaline. Most gladly; and our friendship
Shall bloom the healthier for the thorny stem
On which it hath sprung up. No strife for us,
Let the boughs strive which can outstretch the other,
And wave the best shade o'er us; and the breezes,
Which can drive on the brighter crowd of ripples
O'er the curl'd lake, to be the festal lights
To our high marriage; while a thousand birds
Sing loud of friendship, and the water-flowers
Do quaff fresh draughts in their uplifted cups,
Drinking to our young love. I could lie here,
And with the long day waste my weariness,
Close my faint eyes, and image me such scenes
As fancy fashions out of richest clouds,
And hang the world with tapestries of dreams,
Then ope them, and shed tears for very joy,
To find all phantasy surpassed by these
Wonders of beauty that here wind us round,
And make us gods in light.

Elfgard. Thou wand'rest strangely.
Does youth make men such vision-children, then?
Thy beard hath not my grey, yet I when younger
Was never thus. If the swift hour that builds
A perilous bridge for friendship over war
Needs more than its own grandeur, let us seek
A ring of warriors to cry nobly done
To our hands' ruddy grasp—and if not so,
I would that nature to behold this sight
Had sat spectatress in more warlike trim,
With crags—earth's sentinels that watch the skies
To catch their bolts, and echo quick alarms
To Plenty camped in valleys underneath,

With dark cloud-banners shaking o'er our heads,
And eagles in them for their blazonry;
Something that stirs the soul, and lifts it up
Like a proud wave toward heaven, not levels it
Into a passive calm that must be mirrour
To everything that crosses.

Argaline. The still waters
Hold in their hearts all visiting stars of heaven,
And all the flowers that slumber on their banks,
And house the hot sun in a cooling palace,
Making meet in them all the fairnesses
Of earth and heaven; while the insensate billows
Are blind to all but their own rages.

Elfgard. Aye,
But a boy's pebble mars all in a moment.
Enough of this. Tell me now whence it is
Thou seem'st so fit to win a world, and then
Musing at evening let it glide from 'neath thee
And miss it not; for high emprise and dreams
Both strive for thee, and whether air or earth
Should hold thee, I know not.

Argaline. See then before us
How that hill-streamlet leaps down like a child,
Through rock and bush, to give what it has gather'd
Unto this lake, that with a gentle beating
Of surfing wavelets, tenderly impatient,
As with a mother's voice doth call to it—
In the rock's hollows in its way it lies
So calm and lucent you scarce see 'tis there;
In steeper parts 'tis wild with foamy fury,
Yet the same water still—and such am I,
One nature, and yet twain. A garrison
Of parti-coloured thoughts o'ercrowds my soul;
And one day all the Berserks of the North,
Beside the raging of my started valour,
Would seem calm children—on the next I feel
The hero hath gone out of me, and not
The weak thoughts of the daintiest love-sick lady
So idly aimed as mine. When I have conquered,

My foes have called me too fierce for this world;
I leave them, and alone I weeping chide
A world too rough for me. Methinks I lived
In some anterior state forgotten now—
Some golden age—some high orb kindlier-sphered,
That had no shadow—so oft happens it,
That when I most have sought to till my soul
To hardy fruitfulness, 'tis all o'erflooded
By weak rememb'rings, under which sinks down
The head of resolution—they are sweet;
And yet, like spirits that we strive to embrace,
I cannot grasp their forms, or rightly tell
What that past was which held my happiness.
Of home or parents I know naught. I found me—
'Tis now a year—in arms as now I am
Under a summer forest in a calm
So weirdly windless, that about the grass,
Speckled with shadowed leaves, the fairies played
Upon the alternate moveless lights and shades
At draughts with pebbles. After wandering much
Through camp and court—as once I rode alone,
I met a woodman with a wondrous tale
Of the here-prisoned and oft-sought Olympia.
Love entered me for her I never saw:
Hither I came and fought. My pain I know,
This yearning vain—this strife of strength and weakness,
For my two natures are wide-parted—like
Two shipwreckt sailors cast upon two rocks
Who cannot aid each other.

Elfgard. Strange! methinks
Charmed Nature changed her mood in moulding thee,
And built thee up of glorious contraries,
Changing as sunset, restless as the waters,
And sad as moonlight. Thou fresh-housed treasure,
I would go forth with thee, and, questioning, rack
The stone-ribbed body of this aged world,
Holder of many secrets, to wring from it
The mystery of thy birth—wouldst thou cast off
Thy present quest, and could I, too, withhold
The dear and happy service I here owe.

Argaline. And canst thou miss the honouring shows o' the earth,
And cut thee from its golden links of glory,
Forget all ventures, tourneys, embassies,
And winter here beyond the suns of courts,
Far from the soft arms and the murmurous voices
That make the musical nest of wearied valour;
Lying a dead limb in the silver ring
Of this far lake?

Elfgard. All men elsewhere do lie
In Arctic ice and cold; but being here,
I walk within a summer light of beauty
That makes all else a shadow.

Argaline. Can it be
That she who dwells here is thus strangely fair?

Elfgard. Fair! God hath scattered up and down the earth
Full many a coin of beauty—here He keeps
The casquet where is laid the golden pattern
And only perfect mould. Long had I been
Like to an eagle poised, that looks wide o'er
The brotherhood of mountains, to find out
The grandest height to build his eyrie on,
When I beheld this angel fresh from heaven,
And, like the flowers that sprang up after her,
In serving her began a new-born life.
What should entice me from such freedom here
To your vast prison, or lead one late cured
To travel with diseased ambition's burthen
The dusky walks of the world?

Argaline. When was't and how
That first you saw her? Is she here perforce,
Or sings she free in this removëd cage?

Elfgard. Look in my face, Sir Knight! Seem I like one
Of those strange-fashioned magick men-at-arms
That wizards build to guard their prey withal?
What law of heaven should govern in this place
But her high will? And why defied I thee,
But that thou cam'st to put force on that will?
I am the thorn unto this blushing rose,
To wound the grasping hand of enterprise,

And to let blood the lustful-fevered world
That panting crowds this way.

Argaline. Know that I came
To loose, or let remain, as best might seem
To the fair dweller here—to disembark
My swarming thoughts on some campaign like this.
For in their native land they do but hatch
All melancholy treasons.

Elfgard. One there is
Dwells with her here—an honourable man,
The trusted watcher o'er her orphanhood.
He brought her at her wish to this far place;
For having lost those best beloved—the dead—
She finds in lonely grief her only rest.
He having seen me at a tourney once,
How I could bear me, bade me follow her
And guard her thus.

Argaline. And hast thou any hope
Thyself at last to win her?

Elfgard. Ask not this—
The weight of questioning might break the thread
On which my hope is hung. Is't not enough
To see, to hear, to bow within the shrine?
The cloud but seeks a faint hue of her beauty
To colour it, and would not press too near
Lest it obscure a ray. Low like this lake
Beneath that white and heaven-conversing cliff,
I watch her fairness in its sunny height,
Contented with the image in my heart.
Now will I go fetch somewhat from within
That may refresh thy faintness.

[ELFGARD *goes within the Castle.*

Argaline. Would to heaven
All brave men's foes were fashioned after thee:
Suspicion would unloose the hearts of men,
And envy die extinguished everywhere.
They that have slept in noise are waked by silence,
And lest thou stir thee in this interval,
Now, my sad heart, I'll make thee sleep with singing.

[*He walks to and fro, and sings.*

SONG.

O, Solitude and Silence! who love best
To make far seas your rest,
But led by Evening, venture oft to shore,
When Earth of Daytime wearying more and more,
Waits your approach, that ye may call her daughter,
The Moon, from bathing in some Eastern water,
To come, and with pure kisses meek
Seal slumber on her restless cheek,
Turning on that lone pillow, the wide air.
Ye awful Twain! how blest a gift ye were
If ye were as ye seem—an outstretched shore
To which our hearts' vexed waves might crowd and die.
False! false! Your seeming peace is cruelty,
And emptiness your store.
How oft from the world's chace have wounded hearts
Fled fond to you, to lie and bleed alone
Upon the lap of some green loneliness,
When there arise and round the spirit press
A host of ambushed thoughts, that with their darts
Make many wounds of one.

The other side of the Castle.

(*Enter* PYRKÆUS, *who paces the Battlements.*)

With what high vaunts—Alas! how fallen since—
Left I the persecuting airs of hell
To sojourn here. Thou blameless sufferer,
How thou tormentest thy tormentor now!
Patience! thou worm that always witherest up
Our widest spreading curses, making them
Fall like dead leaves upon men's streams of life;
What can we do against thee! Sad Olympia!
I killed thy parents, and next from thee snatched
Thy childhood's friend, and last hope, Eveline.
And then, all tears with seeming sympathy,
Kept near, pretended surgeon of thy hurt,
To press the barb yet deeper in thy breast.
How thou dost bare to me thy bleeding heart,
And with clasped hands pray God, and calling me
Thy one friend after him, talk hopefully

Of meetings after death. Accursed ending!
That all my toil should only build thee up
Into an altar for God's hated praise.
Ah! yet I pity her—no, 'tis not pity,
Poor baffled fool, 'tis lust. Vile shape of man,
Cannot I put thee on without man's weakness?
I may afflict, but may not stain her pureness,
Yet fain would love her, not thus sore afflict her.
So God's keen watchers smile contempt at me,
Thus less than man, that would be more than God.
O, Chaos, break those deep-laid pillars up
That prop the bridge to earth. Was hell's woe, then,
So shallow, we must fill our cups from hence,
But to go back and sevenfold curst lie down
Within the dolourous porch? Still, while thou may'st,
To this thy work. Nay, but that loveliness
Will make the tempting torture to the tempter!
Yet evil must be done—'tis hell's law—mine—
'Tis here, and must be fed.

(*Enter* ATTENDANT SPIRIT.)

O, great Pyrkæeus,
With what vast work dost thou oppress the world,
That with such angry-chasing messages
Thou sent'st to find me out and drive me hither
To help thee with my service?

Pyrkæeus. Insolent,
What didst thou at such distance from my call?
Hast thou forgot thou hadst been now in hell
Had I not brought thee thence to do my bidding?
Where wast thou?

Spirit. Mighty lord, be merciful:
I did but voyage the mazes of the worlds
To find for evil some great anchorage.
I spent a space coursing with bearded comets,
And when I had outsped them, lay outstretched
In the cool shadow of some moon's eclipse,
To see their huge eyes growing in the darkness
As they came roaring up. I o'ertook stars,
Orbs like this earth, and on them lay full length,

Covering their desert continents; and when
Weary, I sighed, the sultry hurricane
Toppled the creatures' towers, and sunk their ships
In their vexed ocean-pools. I sought me out
The vortex of great forces—saw them turn
The hinges of creation; and I tossed me
In the huge blasts of those eternal currents
That drive the broad wheels of the universe;
Till making for a farthest line of light,
That blinded me as I came nigh to it,
I struck against the battlements of heaven,
And fell back foundering to the arms of darkness,
Whence thy dread words did shake me.

Pyrkæus. Fool, no more,
What canst thou do out there? The soul of man,
That is the only prosperous field of inroad
Where sin may pitch its tents. One hour of labour,
And a soul ruined in't, had made thee famous;
But what can ages of such aimless roaming
And shifting of thy burthen profit thee,
Or me—or any of us? If again
I find thee heedless of our common work,
I'll give thee tasks that till the judging day
Shall not be done—set thee to find a flaw
In those great works thou mak'st thy baby-playground,
Or force thee toil to make the smallest jarring
In the sweet silver musick of the sphæres.
Now, listen. 'Tis not many moons agone
Since from Olympia I took Eveline,
To torture each with severance, and to punish
The friend by whom Olympia was so nourished
With holiest thoughts. I transformed Eveline
To a man's shape—gave her might masculine
To case a woman's heart, and sent her forth
To war among the fiercest, and within her
Such love and memory of tenderness
As should be daily galled by the rough world,
Making her life one wound. Go search her out,
Use thy best art (with the more pain to her,
To me more pleasure) to divert her steps

From haply wandering near Olympia;
For on the instant they shall touch each other
The enchantment ends, and all my others with it;
And we, dishonoured, must return to hell,
Nor soon again come hither. Quick, begone! [*Exit* SPIRIT.

(OLYMPIA *enters on the Walls.*)

Pyrkæeus. Ah! there she shines, dim through her autumn weeping,
That rainy landscape of a perfect beauty
That should be bright with summer. Thou fair soil
I sowed so thick with sorrows, thou hast made
Thy reaper fold in his surprised bosom
The golden grain of love. But stay—once more
Thou shalt be sore assayed; my love and hate
Shall both be sated on thee. Could I now
So make thee gaze from forth thy height of grief
O'er thy great loneliness, and represent
The windows of heaven's help all closed up,
And piteous praying now an empty thing,
And so disseat thee from thy rest of hope,
Turn thine offended guards to other charges,
Making the thirst for my sweet poisoning medicine,—
Then might I in some gallant form of youth
Possess thee yet.

[OLYMPIA *approaches* PYRKÆEUS.

Attended still, my daughter,
With a weak company of new-shed tears?
They are ill handmaids to thy beauty, love:
Give Grief, thy labouring prisoner, rest at last
From his close darkness, let him forth to sleep
In the warm sunshine of more hopeful thoughts.
Let time that will take from thee all things else,
Take some part of thy sorrow.

Olympia. I heard just now
A sound—the only sweet thing rich enough
To ransom me an hour from Memory's chains:
O such rapt singing!—tell me whose it was,
That stole my sorrow's heart ere I was 'ware,

And did anoint the evening's jewelled hair
With streams of precious musick. I'll no more
Listen the night through to my nightingales,
That have been oft my unseen sentinels
To keep off sleep and hosts of mournful dreams.
I'll have that voice kept here—pay it with tears,
Make it the wings of prayers, and give it leave
To roam all through my heart. Do, good Pyrkæeus,
Bring here that singer for me. O those tones
Did make the blue vault holding them forget
It held earth's woe beneath it. How they died
Upon the west's roseate clouds that were too rough
To be the pillows of such gentle notes;
While every wave that had waked up to listen,
Sank back to nothing with the sound it loved.
My heart has poured out all its tears, and now
Is thirsty for some weeping melody;
Thine own sage words were not so powerful
As those lost sounds. My soul deserteth now
Its master, Grief, and goes to search for them.

Pyrkæeus. My poor sick daughter, how it glads my heart
To see my patient wake from her dead faintness,
And own a charm in something—though that thing
May be fit but to stir such appetites
As disease rules. If musick hath the wit
To tutor thee thus well, I will bring here
One that from far hath followed me, whose voice
Shall draw the world from thy dissolving eyes,
And centre all its sweetness in thy heart,
So shalt thou say that all but sound is fable,
And the ear, the queen of sense. O thou shalt rule
A gathered train of all the harmonies
That birds, and trees, and winds, and waterfalls
Have wasted hitherto on lovely nature,
Which journeying up in one long strain of musick,
Shall fill thy heart's court, meekly worshipping,
Till slumber shuts the gate. But as for him
Whose voice my ear, too, caught—trust me 'tis one
Of those same frothy knights thy good rock Elfgard
So oft beats wiser back. Beware, my child,

Sorrow's a better lover than such gallants,
Whose souls live outside—in the dress o' the body,
Who pray to falsehood, to light seeming fire
Where their hearts should be—whose dull eyes take light
But from the brightness of the eyes they look in.
They hunt about like foxes for a cave
In some maid's empty heart—that hath an echo
Which makes their whining sound august as thunder.
Be ice to such. These are they
That jostle true love's earnest modesty,
Outvoice true vows with vaunting flatteries,
And lay true passion bare to slanderers,
Crusading with that pure cross painted on them.
But thy obedient heart already tells me
These words are needless.

Olympia. Thou hast said enough.
I match thee in thy scorn—my heart, I trust,
Hangs far above their reach. I marvel such
Can find so sweet songs in his barren bosom.

Pyrkœus. Innocent child, thus all the world goes on
Beyond these mountains. Here a faithful glass
Of unstained nature shows thee all things truly.
Man has made such a many-sided mirrour
With the ups and downs of life, that vice seems comely
And virtue hateful. There's no certain knowing
The truth of either. Sometimes we must work
Ill to reach good—then nobly to be wicked.
The more I see, the more I miss the goodness
That should be in God's world—He gave the bad
Tongues sweet for lying, but He leaves the truth,
Whose God He is, bitter, and so shunned justly.
Perhaps I probe too deeply—'tis not loyal
To seem to see those oversights—Trust me
I know a thousand paths. In the one good
Thou shalt be led.

Olympia. These are sad thoughts. Mayest thou,
Long spared, direct me in a world so bad,
I know it but through thee. Heaven pay thy goodness!
Our father sees who help the fatherless,

And thus walk like their God. I was just reading
How the poor cup of water blessed the giver
Much more then thy great favours.

Pyrkæus. Speak not thus;
I look for no reward for aught I do:
God hath torn from me all my happiness,
Left me no comfort but to do to thee
As I have done. I have not warned thee yet,
But now 'tis needful, not to pore so fondly
Over that awful page. Many good men
Whom I have ever loved have thought it well
To keep it from the people. It hath power
To unhinge the spirit—cut the nerves of action—
Spread feasts of dreams—melt present gratitude
To weak and watery expectation—
When read as most do read it. Give the book
Into my keeping—fruit I'll give thee thence,
Pressed by my counsel into healthiest wine,
To make thee truly happy.

Olympia. Nay, this last request
Brings thee my first refusal. I have found it
The only counseller that knows my heart,
That sought my sorrow in its hiding-place,
And drew it thence with comfort. Is not God
Wisest of teachers? No, I'll not part with it;
I'll not betray my peace-maker, my friend,
That is God's friend and man's,—and bid it hence,
Saying—Thou canst not cure!

Pyrkæus. Hath it ne'er chanced
That wish for cure hath brought belief of it?
The world lies groaning 'neath more numerous faiths
Than it bears nations—scarce the wildest of them
But works some text into its angry banner.
All these are wise—are sober—confident—
And see with the eye of truth. How then art thou
In this thy self-made bark unpiloted,
Charmed against foundering in the Eternal Sea.

Olympia. Doubtless poor men will mainly strive 'bout that
The eternal rarity that gives them life.

In much I may be wrong, but this I know,
That God is love, and love made red a cross,
Wherefrom our tearful cheeks, all guilty pale,
Regain life's hue—that dissolution comes,
But God comes with it, lest it do us harm,
Guiding the hand that strikes us, and lets down
The beaming stars whereon we mount to heaven,
Far past our height of hope. O friend, hast thou
The yearning for such end—or wilt thou tell me
The Bible saith not this?

Pyrkæus. I envy thee,
That with such nimble wing canst overfly
Mystery's abyss, and peaks of difficulty.
Oft in my love for thee I've thought it strange
That prosperous sinners, flourishing their honours
Close to heaven's eye—tainting the topmost air
With raised corruption—laughing in heaven's ear,—
His hurrying bolts have missed, and upon thee,
The bruisëd reed, fallen thus merciless.
Thou'lt say 'tis for thy sins—thy sins, my child!
Thou hast not yet had time, or heart, or tempting.
Thy mother's sole bequest, her piety,
Thou hast so watered with obedient tears
Its shadowing hath grown hurtful.

Olympia. Wouldst *thou* say so,
O pattern hidden in God's heart of peace,
Now no more mine to copy? Well I know
That God hath dried from off that angel face
The tears thou shedd'st o'er thine imperfect service,
With smiles of light ere this. If she, Pyrkæus,
Felt guilty, what am I? Had I been sinless,
I had not let grief shake obedience off,
And murmuring questioned heaven. I had striven less,
Restoring God His own. He shone in pity
Thus early through that mournful morning mist
On the dead ashes of my early joy,
And lit heaven's spark of hope. Lost Eveline!
Now I could fold thee to a warmer heart
Than that thy loss made cold. Is it so strange

Our feet should go by thorny ways to him
Whose head wore thorns for us?

Pyrkæus. If I had left thee
When thy God left thee thus alone and helpless
What hadst thou done? I scorn to bid thy thoughts
Traverse the circle of that world of service
Whereof I made thee centre. Well thou knowest
That deeds, not words, have been my ministry,
Unthinking of return. Give, then, the Past
Leave to speak for me—make what I have given
My riches for the future. Come with me,
Gift the thin air with these its rightful dreams;
And I will lead thee through the joys of the world.
Ambition shall behold thine entering beauty,
And own he strove for nothing; while the bravest,
Within the smallest flower that decks thy bosom
Would gladly fold their souls; and lest the earth
Exhaust her stores in welcoming thee with flowers,
Envy must spread soft carpets for thy tread.
Thy breath shall be good wishes, and thy life,
Precious as each man's own—thy slightest word
A prize for kings to catch, and thy commands
Like leaves o' the tree of life be circulated,
The wealthiest coin of nations. Thou knowest not yet
The bliss of the worshipt stars.

Olympia. Mock me no more—
Yet thou hast leave—but no leave to mock God.
I thought thee wise, I thought thee pitiful.
Where is thy wisdom thus to wrong thy Maker?
Where is thy pity thus to tempt the helpless?
Mine earthly comfort wrongs my heavenly one,
And in me shakes the sleeping angel, peace.
Draw nigh, my God. Oh, now am I indeed
Left here alone. Have mercy on him, Heaven!
Search out the barren corner of his heart,
And plant thy pity there! [*Pyrkæus turns away.*

Pyrkæus. O Misery!
Come hither, all ye pain-inventing fiends,
And see what babes at torturing ye are
Beside one woman here!

[*The clash of swords is heard;* OLYMPIA *and* PYRKÆEUS *hasten round to the quarter whence the sounds proceed, and see* ARGALINE *and* ELFGARD *fighting beneath.*

Argaline. Stay, gentle knight,
Thou'rt weak with bleeding.

Elfgard. I have more blood yet
Waits to leap out to show thee what my heart is.
There speaks a tongue in every wound thou givest
To plead my love with her. Come on, true friend,
My love shall offer her no less than life,
Or thine or mine, for death I'll make Love's slave
One of his costly presents.

(*He rushes furiously upon* ARGALINE, *whose sword passes through his body.*)

Olympia. I will save him!

Pyrkœus. Madwoman, stop. That furious man will kill thee.

(*She hastens down, pursued by* PYRKÆEUS, *who in vain attempts to detain her.*)

Argaline. Accursed rashness! Speak, oh, speak to me,
And treat my soul with pardon.

[*Re-enter* OLYMPIA *through the gate, followed by* PYRKÆEUS. *Fearing that* ARGALINE *will slay the fallen* ELFGARD, *she rushes forward, and seizes the victor's hand, who on the instant becomes* EVELINE. PYRKÆEUS *vanishes.*

Olympia. Merciful heaven! what strange new life is this
That shines beside the dying? Is he dead,
And his soul housed in thee? Ah, no, these drops
Are mortal tears—those meek and wondering eyes
Are Eveline's. Give me thy hand, long-parted;
We'll cast twin bruiséd flowers upon this corpse
To which the world is cavern. Oh, here lies
Truth's mirrour broken quite, and honour's treasure
Rifled by death; ejected valour now
Hath lost his palace, and the widowed earth
Her only perfect man. O Eveline!
Speak to me, Elfgard.

Elfgard. Never yet, dear lady,
Could I find imaging high wrought enough

To show thee my love's reverence; but now Death—
Whereunto I have loved thee—gives me words.
Wouldst thou then know that love—how vast it was,
When thou art dying, and begin'st to know
How holy, high, and thought-outmeasuring
Is Death—remember me, and that my love
Was great—as Death is. [*Dies.*

Eveline. Oh, let us die, too,
And be two angels to bear up his soul—
Unless heaven lay this slaughter upon me
Which stained my other self. What have I done?
Who am I and what was I? Only friend,
I'll cling to thee lest I be changed once more
To some fierce monster. See, the pitying blood
That would not have me think I murdered him
Comes bubbling up to paint his white lips red.

Olympia. No bound to wonders. See, where stand we now?
Hath all this gone from us, or we from it?
Castle, and lake, and mountain, vanisht all,
And we alone on this wide, houseless heath
With that marred corpse. Sister, let's pray to God.
Sure evil natures have been busy with us,
And mocking us with dreadful counterfeits,
Have left us here to die.

An ANGEL *enters.*

Daughters, arise,
From your strange trouble rise, and bless your God.
With these wretched mockeries build up for your faith
A throne that doubt shall shake not—let this triumph
Light you all through life's way, and grateful thoughts
Counsel you heavenwards. Thy well-trusted Book
Lies on the sward unscathed. Hide deep the pearl
In your full flooded hearts. Now towards the south
Journey a space, and there shall meet you men
We know as remnants of earth's nobleness,
Who shall win back your long-defrauded rights,
Dowered with true love. This body be my care
As its soul has been. I will bury it
Where ye may come at times and mourn for one

That left war's crest without its topmost plume;
Whose death cut off the noblest brotherhood
Of valour and of pity—left none like
To wipe the blood of mortal slaughter off
With angel-soft compassion. Well may he
Shine armed in Heaven a winged pursuivant!

(*The scene closes.*)

August, 1845.

THE PILGRIM IN THE TEMPLE.

(WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.)

1846.

I.

THIS book is a fair temple, thou the priestess,
And we who herein write are travellers,
That bring each one his offering. Some have come
And set up here their votive monuments
In letters graven strange. Here are such words
As the rude horsemen of Sarmatian wastes
Do shout amid their tempests; here, too, sounds
That, syllabed in the luxurious east,
Have drawn their sweetness from the Indian air;
Here that imperial language of old Greece
Wherein spake poets and philosophers
Who bade the world move onwards; here the tongue
Wherein was converse between God and man
Upon the plains of Mamre.
Last came one,
A pilgrim, with no relics brought from far,
Whose only journeyings had been those of thought,
With no world-wisdom, save what lies in feeling
That to lay claim to wisdom is not wise;
Poor or rich only in some few bright fancies
Which he thought Poesy—small treasure this,
Yet 'twas his best, for many a time it made
Earth heaven to him, and slew despair with music.
So this he brought, and wakened in the fane
Sounds, ah! not sweet, but which he would were so:
A harp ill strung, a hand with little skill,
But a heart willing, breathed the following wish.

II.

THE WISH.

May it be thine, e'en in the heart of change,
And cloudy shifting of earth's circumstance,
To hold this truth, that God would have thee happy;
So trust Him, and let His will, not thine own,
Create joy for thee. Ever may'st thou seek
In Him thine all, and in His creatures nothing,
Loving the hand that gives more than the gifts.
In thy soul's treasury may there richly lie
Those shining thoughts that have God's image on them,
And are the coinage spirits use in heaven.
May Faith with fair hand lift the veil away
That makes Affliction dark, and show how Love
Looks smiling underneath; while Hope sets wide
The gateways of thy heart for Joy to come
And hold his triumph there. Mayest thou make, too,
Of Art's delights a train that minister
And lay bliss at thy feet. (God gives us Earth
While we are waiting Heaven.) May Melody
Be thy sweet servant to enwreathe thy soul
With its entwined sounds: may Painting make
A rainbow for thee, through whose arched hues
Looking, thou shalt behold Nature herself more fair;
And first and last, may bright-eyed Poesy,
That hides within this tangled wood, the world,
Where few may see her, choose thee favourite,
And, like a precious mantle, spread thy soul
To catch the dews of beauty fresh from Heaven.
These things be for thyself, and in thyself;
As for the things without, may this rough world
Lay gentle hands upon thy gentleness:
Where thou shalt trust, may it forget its falseness;
And, when thou lovest, may it be one to whom
It shall not be unwise, without a fear,
To give thy whole heart up. Even one whose soul
Made rich with earnest and devouted thoughts
In all he is, in all he hopes to be,
Shall be thine own, thy lifetime's guard and joy:
One in whose inmost heart thy words of love

Shall be upgathered like the golden leaves
That fall from the tree of life. By his sure side
May our rough path to Heaven seem smooth to thee,
While half thy griefs he bears, and to thy joys
Shall add a double crown. Ah! may'st thou find
That rarest flower of Love, which lives and grows
Fed by the breath of angels, doth not droop
In sorrow's thunder shower, but sweetly blows
With Time its spring, Eternity its summer,
Blessing both worlds with its true-heartedness.

III.

The harp ceased and the song. Such was the wish,
And as the notes died off, so died the sound
Of the departing steps of him who made it.

LINES FROM FLORENCE.

1847.

Precious the day of travel, 'tis the time
To find a friend in History, who before
Was but a teacher cold, though so sublime.
'Tis then we more than guess the days of yore,
Living them, with the actors, o'er and o'er,
Where men have played their farce or tragedy,
Adding with either to their misery's store—
We see 'twas then as now—and so e'en we
On our own grief can muse, as though 'twere history.

In youth we stand upon the mountain's brow,
Look on life's valley rough and rent below,
One hour of stillness, while we think on *how*,
Then, steeled with forethought, down to deeds we go,
Burning to fell the hundred-handed foe.
Ay! we are sons of an Olympian seed,—
Vain waits the world to vanquish us with woe,
Still shall we smile and battle though we bleed,—
Whate'er may be the end, divine shall be the deed.

THE END.


00047619

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 March, 2016